WORKPLACE DISCIPLESHIP IN A TECHNOLOGICAL ERA:

BIBLICAL INSIGHTS FOR CHINESE CULTURE

A THESIS-PROJECT

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DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY

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To my wife, Lu-Chun Jean Chen,

for her calling to serve God and her love to me and our three daughters.

Thank you.

CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

Figures

Chart

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

CBCGL   Chinese Bible Church of Greater Lowell

DMin   Doctor of Ministry

EPG   Enterprise & Partner Group

GCTS   Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

IT   Information Technology

LXX   Septuagint

MDi   Master of Divinity

ThM   Master of Theology

WTEL   Workplace Theology, Ethics and Leadership

ABSTRACT

This thesis-project is intended to provide a workplace discipleship program in the technology era for Chinese Christians. Chinese Christians are influenced implicitly by Chinese Culture. This kind of culture impacts their theology of work deeply. There is a gap between their faith and discipleship and how these are expressed in the workplace. Given the rapid change in the technological working environment, moreover, there is a gap between work and technology. Therefore, this thesis-project aims to overcome these gaps. The contents of the discipleship program in this thesis-project integrate three major areas: Theology of Technology, Theology of Work and the impact of Chinese Culture on work.

THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

A New Need for Chinese Christians to Know How to Live Out Their Faith in the

Workplace, Especially in the Technology Era

Workplace Discipleship in 21st century could play an important role in advancing

of kingdom of God for Evangelical Churches, especially Chinese Churches. On one hand,

technology development in the 21st Century has significantly changed the workplace

environment and the interaction between individuals. On the other hand, Chinese

culture still provides an implicit impact to all the Chinese Christians. The theological

reflection in the theology of work area could be a great teaching topic for discipleship

formation. Therefore, Workplace Discipleship for Chinese Churches in 21st century needs

to address these issues, namely, technological impact, Chinese cultural insight and

theology of work together. Chinese Churches know the importance of these concerns.

However, for Chinese Churches it is very difficult to respond to these rapid changes and

concerns in a timely manner. This thesis-project tries to propose a discipleship program

to address these concerns.

The Chinese economy is currently the number two GDP country in the world in

2014 and will soon become the number one GDP in the next 10 to 20 years. The Chinese

Church and Chinese Christians have a tremendous responsibility to teach another way of

approaching the economic world. They can do it in a way nobody else can. As a Chinese

Christian, I can see that the church is growing in spite of persecution in Mainland China,

Taiwan and all the Diaspora. For Chinese Christians, it is a golden age for us and we have

the responsibility to respond to the rapid change of economics and workplace dynamics.

God has put us in a special and unique position. Whatever we teach in the church

concerning these topics must have a huge impact to our global economy. Yet, there is a

gap in between our faith and discipleship in the workplace. Moreover, there is gap

between our work and technology. Therefore, this thesis-project aims to overcome

these gaps.

I am a Chinese Christian. I serve in a Chinese-American Church as a minister.

From the first-hand experience I have had in the Chinese Church for the past 30 years, I

have found that there is a new need for Chinese Christians to know how to live out their

faith in the workplace and to know the impact of technology and to work with

technology from a biblical view. I will argue that this kind of new need is substantial and

urgent. In general, Chinese workers are quiet and low-profile at their workplace. They

follow a certain type of work ethic they have from their own culture. They work hard

and diligently. A majority of Chinese workers work directly or indirectly with technology

jobs or in a technological work environment. They typically do not share too much about

themselves unless they feel safe in their working environment. The same thing is true for

Chinese Christians. They do not share too much about their faith. For most Chinese

Christians, to live out their faith at work is not their priority while they work. Why not?

The answer could be a very important and interesting issue for the modern-day Chinese

Church. This thesis-project will work to discuss details about this issue. In Chapter one,

we will break down this issue from three different angles:

1. The need for Chinese Christians to understand the theology of work.

2. The need for Chinese Christians to understand technology from a biblical perspective.

3. The need for Chinese Christians to understand how Chinese culture impacts their work.

Chinese Christians has difficulty to understand work as a purpose from God. Work has rooted in their blood, however, mostly from Chinese culture impact. Obviously, rapid technology changes to 21st century work does not get too much attention from Chinese Christians from a biblical perspective if they do not know the meaning of work from God. It is certainly very difficult for them to understand technology impact to work. I believe the topics discussed in this thesis-project could benefit Christians worldwide who are co-working with the Chinese Church to advance the kingdom of God.

Gap between Sunday and Monday

The gap between Sunday and Monday is a common problem for many Christians at work.[1] The Sunday sermon and Bible message come to them with little or no connection to their business world[2]. Very often, Christians feel frustrated about this kind

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[1] "Bridging the Gap Between Sunday and Monday", *Langham Partnership*, last modified April 15, 2014, accessed March 21, 2015, http://us.langham.org/bridging-the-gap-between-sunday-and-monday-jane-kong/.

[2] Timothy Keller, *Every Good Endeavor* (New York, NY: Riverhead Books, 2014).

of disconnection.[3] On the one hand, many of the ministries become church-centered[4].

Churches care about the scope of their church ministries only. Marketplace ministry has

been ignored by churches for a long time.[5] Is the local church's leadership aware of this

frustration felt by their members?[6] For example, if you examine the health indices of an

evangelical church, what would you find? On different indices you might find the

strength of the church to be the Sunday attendance, the prayer meeting attendance, the

amount of the weekly offering, the number of supported missionaries, the number of

baptisms per year and so forth. But none of the indices would include something related

to the faith of the Christians at work. Is this because the church considers the business

world to belong to the power of the evil one? If this were so, then the workplace is not

within the dominion of God's kingdom. This cannot be the right answer. Is it possible

that the pastor of an evangelical church is too busy to worry about something like the

relationship between "Sunday and Monday"? Or, perhaps, the pastor is not aware of the

problem or has never been told about nor trained to deal with this kind of issue? The

frustration experienced by many Christians at work could be summed up by a single

question: How could the Christian live out his or her faith at work?

On the other hand, churches may have more problems related to the connection

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[3] John C Knapp, *How the Church Fails Businesspeople (And What Can Be Done About It)* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012), 23-36.

[4] Tom Nelson, *Work Matters: Connecting Sunday Worship to Monday Work* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011).

[5] Williams E. Diehl, *The Monday Connection,* (New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 1993), 7-9.

[6] Robert J. Banks, *Faith Goes to Work* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1993), 3-17.

between Faith and Work. One of my friends, also a church pastor, made a joke about this: "We are no longer focusing on being fishers of men in the ocean or river. We are working in the aquarium to make the fish happy." Although this was a joke, it gives church leaders a chance to think about the church ministries that we are working on. While we ponder this problem, we must also remember that the faith and work problem is by no means a problem for church leaders or pastors only. The concept of Lay Christians is also another big problem that contributes to the gap between Sunday and Monday. We could take baptism as an example. Many Christians consider baptism to mean that they are receiving salvation only. But Edward White, during a pastoral retreat, challenged pastors by rightfully asking: *"How many of the members of your congregation really understand, believe, and practice the conviction that they have been called to full-time Christian service by virtue of their baptism?*[7]*"* When did we start to think that only full-time clergy should be in full-time Christian service, while other Christians are simply part-time, also known as "the lay Christians?" Why did we begin to make these unnecessary distinctions? Is it because of the church? Is it because of the clergy? Is it because of the laity? Or is it because of a lack of the understanding of the theology of work? How could Christians live out their faith naturally at work just as they do at church? Would it be possible for our discipleship programs to be designed in a way so that Christians not only live out their faith in the church but also at their place of employment?

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[7] Banks, *Faith Goes to Work*, 4.

The Gap between Sunday and Monday in the Technology Era Is Even Bigger Than

Before

The Technology Train Is Running Faster Than We Expected

Let me dig a bit deeper into the issue of the gap between Monday and Sunday by considering the impact of technology on each individual, on the workplace, and on the church. Today's Christians are living in the technology era. This makes living out one's faith at work to be more difficult than ever before. As previously stated, there are some gaps between Sunday and Monday such as how to integrate one's faith and one's work. I would like to argue that the gap is even bigger and wider than we think if we do not understand the impact of technology on a Christian's faith.

Traditionally, the church has not paid too much attention to technology. Technology, however, has quietly infiltrated every area in the church now. How many church members are using an iPhone, or an iPad or a smartphone to read the Scriptures during the Sunday service? According to a quick survey during one Sunday in February 2014 at my church, there were about 30-40% of the congregation using a portable electronic device to read Scripture, and this among a congregation with an average age of 50 in an American Chinese Evangelical Church. This trend has nothing to do with pastors or elders. Our church leaders do not like it and do not encourage it. However, we all quietly accept technology's appearance in the church now.

Technology has some advantages and drawbacks. For example, it is convenient to read the Bible from a personal, portable electronic device during the Sunday service.

However, most people would be very easily tempted to read a short message or a pop-up email with the same electronic device even while listening to the sermon. John Dyer, the author of the popular book, *From Garden to City*, shared his experience as a youth pastor who tried to have his youth read the Bible together. He found that the LCD projector was a good idea to encourage uniformity. However, after some time, he found that his youth had become used to going to church without a Bible. Why would they do this, even when John Dyer encouraged them to bring their Bibles every time? Students stopped bringing their Bibles because they just did not see the need to do so. For many of us who have become used to bringing a Bible to Sunday worship, we tend to think that a projector, as a new technology, has some advantages such as allowing youth to read the Bible together. But there are also some drawbacks, such as students gradually becoming used to not bringing a Bible with them. Dyer digs into the problem and thinks even deeper: he explains that the church had very long history during which the Bible was not accessible to everyone. He argues that it was not until the twentieth century that each individual could afford to have a personal copy of the Bible. So, basically he said that having or not having a printed Bible is also a shift of technological change.[8]

Are We Driving Technology or We Are Driven by Technology?

Our concern and key question here for this increasing gap in the technology age is: Do we fully understand technology so that we know how to use it in our daily life at

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[8] John Dyer, *From the Garden to the City: The Redeeming and Corrupting Power of Technology* (Grand Rapids, MI:Kregel, 2011), 22-25.

home, at work and at church? Do we as church leaders ever teach our congregation the right way to use and treat technology? Do we give them some instructions or restrictions or warnings about technology in the same way that we teach our youth how to drive a car? Or perhaps we are forced to accept some technologies. We may not know technology development trends nor their good and bad implications. And we may not know how to instruct our congregation regarding technology.

Technology is neither all bad nor all good. On one hand, unconditionally embracing technology could lead to disaster. On the other hand, rejecting technology totally is not the right way either. No matter if we like it or not, technology is part of our life now. Having a right perspective about technology is important for the church in 21st century. We simply cannot just let the gap between Sunday and Monday caused by technology become wider and wider.

What Is Technology?

We are living in the technology era. Our work environments are using technology to achieve a lot of business purposes. Many people are actually working in technology companies, while others are working in companies which use technology to increase their competitiveness. In other words, we are holding either are specifically technology jobs or jobs has been affected by technology. It is important to know the impact technology has so that we could live out our faith at work in the modern world. But what is technology? Everyone seems know about technology. With this general knowledge, do we really realize its relationship to us? To be more specific, what is the role of

technology in our life and work? At first glance, this question should be easy to answer. However, actually it is not quite easy. If we ask the question 'is technology good or bad', we could quickly say that technology itself is neither always good nor always bad. But do we have any misunderstandings about technology? Or perhaps we have some stereotypes about technology which need clarification.

What Does the Bible Say?

Does the Bible say anything about Technology? Are there any passages in the Bible that promote or denounce technology? Can we learn from Biblical exegesis about any principles we should utilize in our treatment of technology?

Technological Work and Working in the Technology World

At our church, we have more than 80% of the congregation working in a technological job. Do their jobs have any special meaning? Among those so called high-tech jobs, a significant portion of the jobs are even related to the defense industry. How do Christians in these fields consider their jobs in the eyes of God?

The same question is also important for those who work in other industries, like Finance, Education, Medicine and Biology. They all work in a world characterized by the use of technology. Does technology have any impact in their jobs? As they consider that question, they would also like to know what kind of value their work has in the kingdom of God.

The Chinese Church Has One More Issue to Consider

Working Toward 'Success' Is Good But That Is Not the Meaning of Work

"Secret 11 – Forget the 'Do Whatever Makes You Happy' Mentality and Strive for

Professions with Financial Security and Intellectual Fulfillment." This is just one of the 15

secrets to train top kids from a book titled – *Top of the Class: How Asian Parents Raise*

High Achievers and How You Can Too.[9] I believe most Asian parents have not read this

book to raise their children, at least my parents did not and neither have most of our

church members. But there are so many similarities between what this book says and

what our Chinese parents taught us and emphasized every day. I think some of the

things found in this book have already become part of our culture and rooted very deep

into our working habits and concept of work. It is no secret that Chinese students work

so hard to achieve academic honors and Chinese workers work so hard to obtain job

security and success in their workplace. One of the interesting observations that I had

when I first attended the Chinese Bible Church of Greater Lowell in Massachusetts in

2007 was that we had 8 PhDs in our small group Bible Study. The total number of

participants in that small group was 9. I said "Wow, we have a whole bunch of Chinese

elites in the Chinese church." The discussion within this Bible Study was very exciting and

fun. However, sometimes it was very difficult.

Is there anything wrong with this pursuit of academic success and job security?

Yes, there is. The major challenge we have in the Chinese church is that Jesus taught us:

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[9] Soo Kim Abboud and Jane Kim, *Top of The Class – How Asian Parents Raise High Achievers and How You Can Too* (New York, NY: Berkley Books, 2006), 125.

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength."[10] This is not exactly the same goal which is rooted in most of the Chinese elites' minds, even if they are Christian. Chinese people are trained to succeed; they work to be successful and they make sacrifices to be successful, including sacrificing their family relationships or even their faith. But Jesus has said "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."[11]

<p style="text-align:center">The Third Gap</p>

The gap between faith and work exists in the Chinese Church and needs to be addressed. The impact of technology on our work also needs be addressed in the Chinese Church. These gaps in the Chinese Church are even bigger with their inherent concept of work. I will put this as the third gap of faith and work for the Chinese Church. Why do we need to address this issue here? Of course, one of the reasons is that I am a Chinese Christian leader and I care about Chinese church issues. On the other hand, the growth of the Chinese Church and maturity of Chinese Christians will play an important role to advance the kingdom of God in the 21st century. A theology of work which addresses the Chinese concept of work is a key for Chinese Christians who could really live out and share their faith at work. On the flip side, lacking a theology of work is a road block to living out and sharing a Christian's faith at work.

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[10] Mark 12:30.

[11] Mark 8:34.

Why Is a Theology of Work within the Chinese Church Important?

The Theology of Work Is Important

This thesis-project will discuss three components in one paper: The theology of

work, Asian contextualization, especially focusing on Chinese Christians, and the impact

of technology. The Theology of Work has been ignored throughout church history and

we cannot find many theologians discussing it before 1990. However, for the past twenty

some years, the theology of work has become more and more important to the modern

Christian. The TOW (Theology of Work) project is the best proof of this trend.[12]

Evangelical theologians like Volf, Jensen, Miller, Ben Witherington, and R. Paul Stevens

have discussed the theology of work from different perspectives. My Doctor of Ministry

mentors and professors from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Dr. David Gill and

Dr. Al Erisman, are also men who have dedicated their focus to the theology of work

from the angles of Ethics, Technology, Finance, and Globalization. Why has the Theology

of Work become such an important topic now? Of course, we know that the Bible is so

profound that *"the Christian scriptures have much to say about work, although we may*

not be aware of it." And *"every Jesus-follower is called to live out their faith within the*

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[12] "Theology of Work Project" TOW, *Theology of Work Project*, accessed March 21, 2015 http://www.theologyofwork.org/. The Theology of Work Project is an independent, international organization dedicated to researching, writing, and distributing materials with a biblical perspective on non-church workplaces. The Theology of Work (TOW) Project exists to help people explore what the Bible and the Christian faith can contribute to ordinary work. The Christian scriptures have much to say about work, although we may not be aware of it. Dr. Al Erisman, Dr. Sean McDonough, Dr. Alice Matthews, Dr. Haddon Robinson and Dr. Will Messenger are among some of Theology of Work scholars from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

context of their vocation."[13] Living out the faith cannot be limited to Sunday worship and Friday night fellowship. We all know that all Christians who work need to know the meaning and significance between their work and faith so that they can truly live out their faith.

The Chinese Church Is Important

Secondly, the Theology of Work will be related to the Chinese Christian context. I would like to use my recent experience in working with Chinese international students studying in the US to address this impact. According to Reuters reporting,[14] there were more than 800,000 international students enrolled in US colleges and universities in 2012. Among these 800,000 international students, China sent the most students to the USA, totaling 235,597, which is about 30% of the total number of international students. That number grew about 21% from 194,029 in the previous year. Remember this is an increase between the years of 2012 and 2013 only. If the trend continues to be a 20% yearly increase, and if it continues for the next ten years, by 2022 the United States will have 1.4 million Chinese International students with a total of 7.4 million Chinese students having studied in USA during that decade.

This trend is pretty much consistent across the United States. Take my church, the

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[13] "About TOW" TOW, *Theology of Work Project*, accessed March 21, 2015. The Theology of Work (TOW) Project exists to help people explore what the Bible and the Christian faith can contribute to ordinary work.

[14] Susan Heavey, "U.S. Universities See Record Number of Foreign Students, Many from China," *REUTERS,*last modified November 11, 2013, accessed March 15, 2105, http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/11/11/us-usa-education-international-idUSBRE9AA0SB201311111. The actual total number of the students is 819,644.

Chinese Bible Church of Greater Lowell, as an example. We are located very close to the campus of the University of Massachusetts- Lowell. We have been dedicated to host Chinese International Students for the past three decades. Many of our church leaders are actually UMass -Lowell graduates from 20-30 years ago. In the 2012-2013 academic year, we learned from the UMass Lowell admissions office that there were about 100 Chinese students on board. We hosted about 30+ students in our student fellowship. Among these 30+ students, 15 of them accepted Jesus Christ and 11 of them were baptized. Those 15 students have been eager to know Jesus more and have joined discipleship programs with us. Let's take this small scale example as an assumption that 30% of the total Chinese international student population has a chance to hear the Gospel while studying in the US and 15% of the total Chinese international student population becomes Jesus' disciples. With these percentages, the number is pretty easy to calculate: In the US, we will have about 40,000 Chinese students becoming disciples in 2013 and will have 1.1 million Chinese students becoming Jesus' disciples throughout the next decade. We are sowing the seeds of transformation for Chinese churches in the next decades and sowing the hope of advancing the Kingdom of God through the next generation of Chinese young people.

Because of this, we need to ask the question: What is the relationship of the Theology of Work with these Chinese Students? To answer this question, first of all, we have to know what the foremost priority is in the minds of these Chinese students. That is, why have so many Chinese students been sent to the USA? The answer could be very simple. They have come to study in the USA for a better education so that later they

could find a better job, either in China or the USA.

Wang Huiyao, Director of the Ctr. for China & Globalization, said, "*Nearly 390,000 students went abroad to study last year (2012), and around 270,000 came back. Jobs in sales, marketing, and research and development are among the most popular for the returnees. The skills gained during their studies are the most needed for China's globalization. This is a selling point in recruitment.*"[15] This trend of more Chinese students studying abroad with a huge portion of them returning to China will continue for at least another 10 years. These Chinese Students who study in the USA or Europe and accept Jesus Christ will possibly become the new Chinese Church leaders in China for the next generation. It goes without saying how important is the maturity of the Chinese Church since it will play a key role in the roadmap of Gospel preaching to the end of the world and the second coming of Jesus Christ.

How could we change the Success-centric mentality to a Christ-centric mentality for these new Chinese Christians? I think first we need to pray. Prayer changes things and prayer could lead us know more about the heart of the Lord. And second, I think what we could do is to teach them the Theology of Work. A more comprehensive Theology of Work, including awareness of the impact of technology and the Chinese concept of work could prove to be valuable to the kingdom of God.

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[15] Hui Lu,"Over 270,000 overseas Chinese students return in 2012," XINHUANET, last modified November 07, 2013, accessed March 21, 2015, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/video/2013-11/07/c_132866962.htm.

Culture Changing in the Technology Era – Can the Faith at Work Movement Be Feasible

in the Technological Workplace?

The workplace discipleship program is a good match with Faith at Work

Movement. The Faith at Work movement has been brought to the attention of mainline

evangelical churches for many years.[16] We would like to discuss how Christians living in

the technology era could change our culture. David Miller introduced the four E's model,

namely, Ethics, Evangelism, Experience and Enrichment for the Faith at Work

movement.[17] Christians at work may participate in one or more of the modalities within

the four E's model. One of the main concerns for the four E's model is how a Christian

could integrate them well. Integration of the four E's is necessary for the Christians

because a Christian's life is not fragmented. For example, when a Christian decides to

follow Jesus, he or she commits to change his or her life by the Holy Spirit in a holistic

way.

The integration of marketplace ministries within all four fields of the four E's

model could be considered a culture changing process.[18] This changing process is not

only limited to reaching Non-Christians through evangelism, but also includes change

within Christians, who are going through the Sanctification process. In other words,

when a Christian at work tries to live out his faith, he is potentially changing his

colleagues, customers, suppliers and so forth through the impact of his daily working,

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[16] David Miller, *God at Work* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University, 2007), 1-21.

[17] Miller, *God at Work*, 125-142.

[18] Miller, *God at work*, 143-153.

speaking, reacting and living at his workplace. At the same time, this Christian could also

experience personal change to become more like Jesus during his attempt.

Cultural change is also possible within modern culture. The current culture within

a technological workplace could be considered a 21st century culture. Some scholars

have tried to analyze how human beings have changed culturally. Paul Hiebert, from the

missionary world, gave many good insights regarding Anthropological studies concerning

Culture and the change brought about by the Gospel.[19] Hiebert emphasized the

importance of the holistic model of humanity to bring about change.[20] Andy Crouch

presents his view on culture change in the modern world.[21] Is the 21st century

technological workplace a place where people experience culture change? Certainly yes!

Could we borrow the anthropology culture changing model from Hiebert and apply it to

21st century technological Marketplace ministry? If so, how can we relate the model to

the ministry?

What Is Culture

To answer these questions, we need to ask another question: What is culture?

According to Hiebert, culture is "the more or less integrated systems of ideas, feelings

and values and their associated patterns of behaviors and products shared by a group of

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[19] Paul Hiebert, *Anthropological Refection on Missiological Issues* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1994), 9-15.

[20] Hiebert, *Anthropological Insight for Missionaries*, 23.

[21] Andy Crouch, *Culture Making* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP books, 2008), 1-49.

people who organize and regulate what they think, feel and do."[22] Hiebert further

explains there are three key elements within cultures. Specifically, ideas, feelings and

values become the three dimensions of culture. Cultural change, therefore, needs to

come through these three dimensions. The agent of that change is technology.

Technology has changed our thinking, feelings and values.

Introducing a Three Dimensions Model for Culture Change

Hiebert elucidates his three dimensions of culture explaining that they are

Cognitive, Affective, and Evaluative Dimensions. First, the Cognitive Dimension is the

aspect of culture which has to do with the knowledge shared by members of a group or

society.[23] Knowledge lays the foundation for the conceptual content of a culture.

Knowledge is more than what we are taught in school about the many categories that

we use to sort out reality. Knowledge also includes assumptions and beliefs we may use

to understand reality. Also, this cultural knowledge is kept by a people group through a

variety of media. Typically, printed documents, like books and magazines, is one of the

ways to store cultural knowledge. In the modern technological world, many computer

storage technologies like, CD's, disks, USB drives, DVD's, and even network storage could

be used. In recent development, social media has become the central place to store

cultural knowledge. However, oral cultural knowledge is still an important way to store

knowledge. Sometimes, this latter knowledge keeping and sharing method could be

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[22] Hiebert, *Anthropological Insight for Missionaries*, 30.

[23] Hiebert, *Anthropological Insight for Missionaries*, 30.

even more powerful in the technological workplace.

Culture also deals with people's feelings. This is the Affective Dimension. What are people's attitudes? What do they like or dislike? How do they feel about food or clothing? This part is very interesting and sometimes reflected in many areas of our life. For example, in personal life, why do you pick Japanese sushi for dinner and not pizza? You would find it difficult to explain your choice in terms of ideas or knowledge. Usually, it is all about feelings. Again, people are more used to expressing their feelings through social media, like facebook and wechat.

The third dimension of culture, the Evaluative Dimension, is related to the values by which people judge human relationships to be moral or immoral. Typically, there are three different kinds of value judgments: first, something is either true or false. For example, Chinese people think it is true that people who don't take a shower on New Year's Eve can keep all the fortune and goodness in store for them in the upcoming year. A second type of value judgment deals with aesthetics: something is considered beautiful or ugly. For example, Taiwanese people think a female's skin should be as white as possible. They think this because they consider whiter skin to be more beautiful. In American culture, this is probably not true. Many females in American culture consider having some suntan to be more beautiful and healthier. A third type of value judgment has to do with morality: something is either right or wrong. For example, in American culture, to tell a lie is wrong worse than to hurt the feelings of others. In China, or in some other places of the world, it is acceptable, or right even, to try to encourage others with a white lie.

In the technological marketplace culture, business ethics certainly belongs to the evaluative dimension. In a given situation, there is typically a right or wrong judgment. Other examples deal directly with values. The Microsoft Value Statement emphasizes their values of honesty and integrity. However, what is the definition of integrity? For Christians, the standard of integrity is very high. It is not only obeying the laws, but more importantly, Jesus asked his followers to do it from the heart. To love the Lord your God wholeheartedly and to love your neighbor as yourself is the Christians' standard.[24] But for Microsoft, there is another written document called 'Standard Business Conduct.' By following the Standard Business Conduct, according to Microsoft, you are displaying integrity. Now, the question is: is the entirety of the Standard Business Conduct moral? Could it be that the Standard Business Conduct may be not moral when compared with the Christians' standard?

The answer is simple: Yes, it is possible. What Jesus has taught us is a very high standard. To love God wholeheartedly and your neighbor as well is impossible require in the new Marketplace Law, the Standard Business Conduct. More precisely, love is not even a key theme in the Standard Business Conduct.

The key themes of the Microsoft Value Statement are Continuous Excellence, Success, Benefits Exchange (or Win-Win), and Accountability.[25] We have to know in the

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[24] The summarized two principles come from Matthew 22:36-40: "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

[25] "Microsoft Mission and Value", *Microsoft Corporation*, accessed March 31, 2014, <http://www.microsoft.com/about/en/us/default.aspx#values> According to Microsoft's Mission and Values - **Mission:** At Microsoft, our mission and values are to help people and business throughout the

business world Continuous Excellence and Success are assumptions. They are a common

belief. When the corporation talks about its values to the employee, the values of

Continuous Excellence and Success are a prerequisite. Without that, the employees have

no shared value on which to cooperate. That is why the companies layoff people when

their business drops. They do not talk about love. They talk about Continuous Excellence

and Success first. That is the heart of the Marketplace Culture. See the figure below for

the composition of the three dimensions of Marketplace Culture.

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world realize their full potential. **Values:** As a company, and as individuals, we value integrity, honesty,
openness, personal excellence, constructive self-criticism, continual self-improvement, and mutual
respect. We are committed to our customers and partners and have a passion for technology. We take on
big challenges, and pride ourselves on seeing them through. We hold ourselves accountable to our
customers, shareholders, partners, and employees by honoring our commitments, providing results, and
striving for the highest quality.

Three Dimensions of Marketplace Culture

Cognitive Dimension
- Product Knowledge
- Business Rule
- Sale Practices
- Service Agreement
- Program Logic

Affective Dimension
- Feelings
- Respect
- Aesthetics

Evaluative Dimension
- Business Ethics
- Continuous Excellence
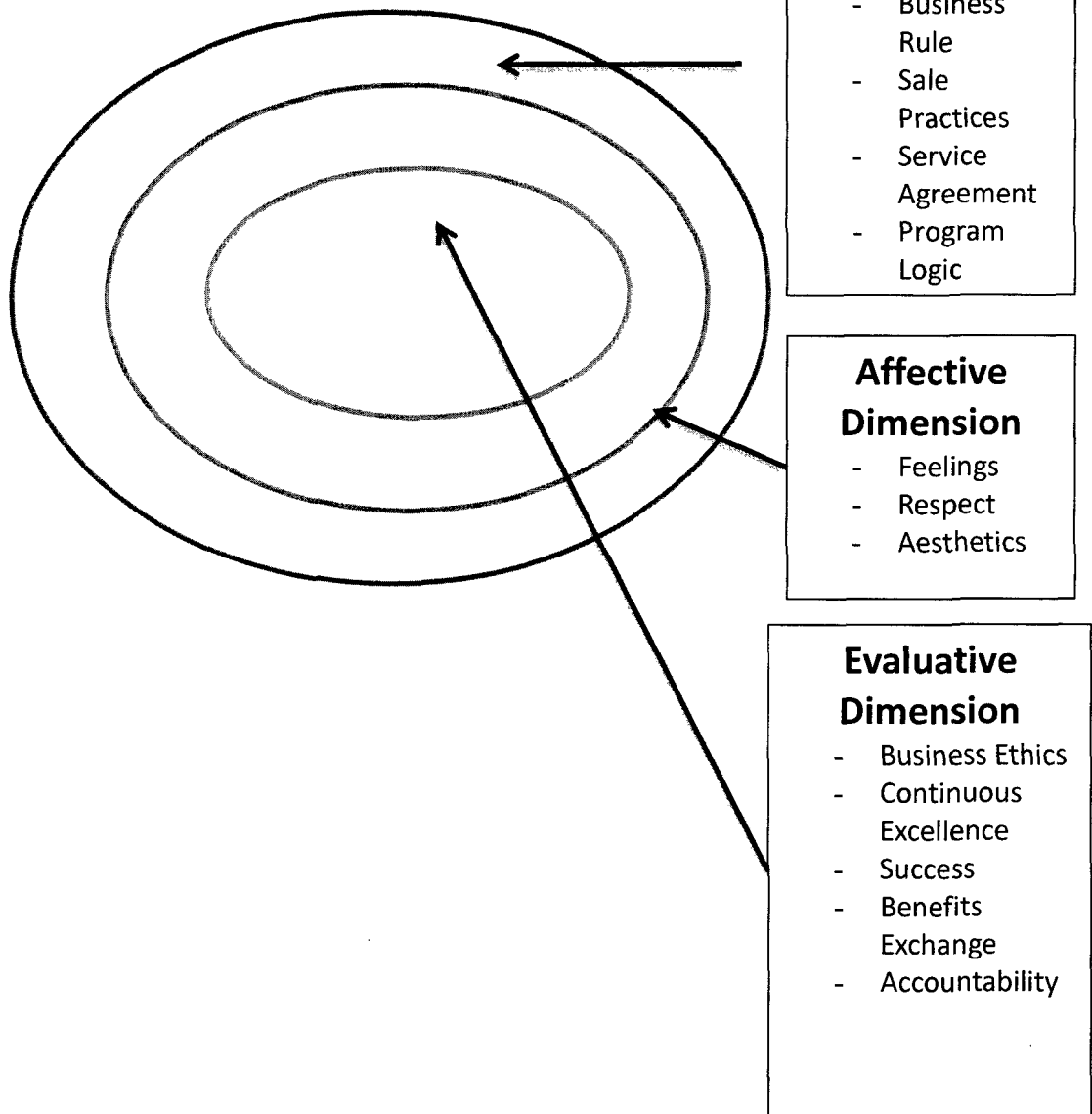- Success
- Benefits Exchange
- Accountability

Figure 1: Three Dimensions of Marketplace Culture

When we contrast Marketplace Culture's most inner dimension of Continuous

Excellence and Success with the Christian Culture's most inner dimension of love, we see

the difference. The Christian's innermost dimension has to do with God. God's

characteristics of love and justice are two key elements within the Christian value

system.[26] The four dimensions of the Christian Culture and Belief system are directed

from the inside out. God himself is the center of belief and the other dimensions move

progressively outward from the Bible to Church Tradition to Local tradition. That means

a Christian will be influenced not only by God but also by all Biblical, Church and Local

Traditions as well. However, the inner circle has more decisive influence than the outer

ones. See the Figure below.

Christian Culture and Belief System
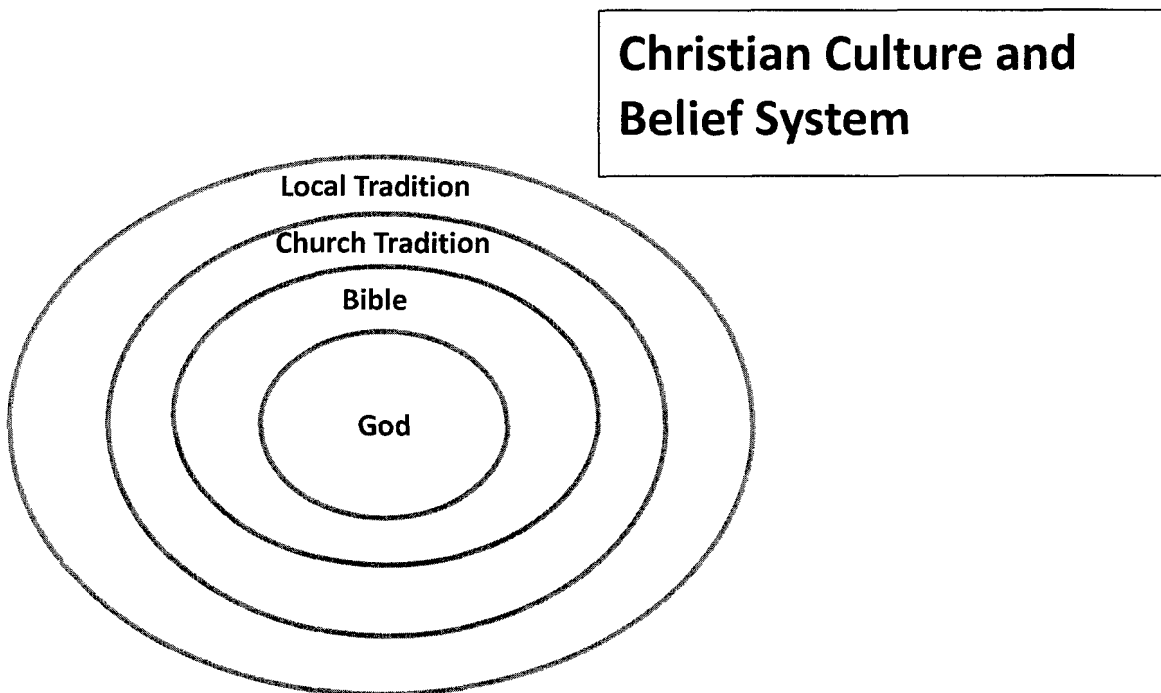
Local Tradition

Church Tradition

Bible

God

Figure 2: Christian Culture and Belief System

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[26] These two key elements are from Hosea 12:6: "But you must return to your God; maintain love and justice, and wait for your God always."

Changed by the Technological Workplace Culture or Changing the Culture

I would like to borrow Andy Crouch's view about culture. 'Culture is not optional.

We could not withdraw from the culture [even if we wanted to]. Culture is inescapable.

And that's a good thing.'[27] Indeed, this is exactly what all working Christians are facing.

We cannot return to the monastic world and disconnect ourselves from the modern

world. This is the world we live in. We need to live with it and possibly work to shape it.

'Culture is what human beings make [from] the world, but not everything that human

beings make shape culture.'[28] In other words, there are two kinds of attitude towards

culture. One could select to live in the world that someone else has made. Or one could

also choose to lead the way in living with a focus on shaping culture.

Qualifications for culture changers

Shaping the technological workplace culture is not easy. Christians who are

working in the technological marketplace and would like to commit to culture changing

need some guidance regarding qualifications for changing culture. Those Christians who

feel that the Sunday pulpit sermon and Bible message has come to them with little or no

connection to their business world should forget about their frustration[29] and focus on

reaching out to change the culture they work in. The following qualifications are

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[27] Andy Crouch, *Culture Making*, 34-36.

[28] Andy Crouch, *Culture Making*, 37.

[29] Williams E. Diehl, *The Monday Connection* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1993), 7-9.

essential for culture changers:[30]

1. He needs to know his calling from God and be committed to doing it
2. He needs to be spiritually qualified
3. He needs a team to work together
4. He needs social skills
5. He needs a proper perspective on Work and Ministry
6. He needs professional qualification
7. He needs to like taking on new challenges
8. He needs to have knowledge and passion for technological work[31]

Even with the above eight qualifications, it is still very difficult for a Christian to transform the culture. We might want to learn a little more from Jesus regarding cultural transformation.

Jesus is a culture changer. Jesus gave a good example of how to change culture through the incarnation - by living among his people. John 1:14 says "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."[32] "The Word *made his dwelling among us*. More literally translated, the Greek verb *skēnoō* means that the Word pitched his tabernacle, or lived in his tent, amongst us."[33] The Greek word for "dwelt" is *skenoo* (skhno,w). It has the same root as the word for "tent," *skene* (skhnh). Its counterpart in Hebrew is the word *Mishkan* (!K'v.mi). This word is rich with meaning. In the Old Testament, it relates to the glory of the Lord in the tabernacle. It definitely does not

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[30] Don Hamilton, *Tentmakers Speak: Practical Advice Form over 400 Missionary Tentmakers* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1989), 1-15.

[31] Qualification list number 8 is what I added for the list of qualifications; it is not from Don Hamilton.

[32] John 1:14.

[33] D.A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, PNTC (Grand Rapids, MI: IVP, 1991), 179.

mean to visit and leave. It means to stay with the sons of Israel. It means to watch over

and protect them. Christians at work should follow the same model. They need to live

and work among the people, not withdraw from them.

Workplace discipleship program for Chinese Christians could be a good initiative

as culture changing program. I would continue the discussion of biblical perspective for

this type of discipleship from Theology of Technology, Theology of Work and Theology of

Culture and Contextualization in Chapter Two.

CHAPTER TWO

THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

In Chapter one, we argued that there is a new need for Chinese Christians to know how to live out their faith in the workplace while dealing with rapid technology change which is urgent and important. How are we going to approach this new need for Chinese Christians? In Chapter two, we will propose a theological model for Christians working in the Technology era. This theological model will include three parts: Theology of Technology, Theology of Work, and the Chinese Cultural perspective on work.

Theology of Technology

Biblical View of Technology

In this section, I would like to highlight some biblical views about technology that we need to know. From a very high-level perspective, I would like to give three concise points about the impact of technology:

1. Technology is a tool. We shape our tools and our tools shape us.

2. Technology itself is embedded with values, some helpful and others harmful.

3. Biblical stories of Creation, Fall, Redemption and Restoration have deep connections with Technology.

We will drill down into more detail for each point and explain why each is so important for us to know.

Technology Is a Tool. We Shape Our Tools and Our Tools Shape Us.

Again, what is technology? The definition from Wikipedia states:

"Technology (from Greek τέχνη, *techne*, "art, skill, cunning of hand"; and -λογία, -*logia*) is the making, modification, usage, and knowledge of tools, machines, techniques, crafts, systems, and methods of organization, in order to solve a problem, improve a pre-existing solution to a problem, achieve a goal, handle an applied input/output relation or perform a specific function. It can also refer to the collection of such tools, including machinery, modifications, arrangements and procedures."[1]

Here the word 'tool' is one of the key words in this definition. And certainly, tools which we call technology are a way for solving a problem and improving something for our world. John Dyer expands our understanding of technology by arguing three ways that technology transforms: first, technology is the means by which we transform the current world into the world that we desire.[2] Dyer not only argues that we use technology to transform our world but he also argues that we are transformed by the technology. And thirdly, technology transforms the world and ourselves by finding its way into our souls.[3] The first two points are not that difficult to understand, while the third point is actually talking about technology becoming our god as an idol. It is just like David Hopper said "Has not technology come to embody our chief values – the things we want most out of life?"[4]

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[1] "Technology," *Wikipedia*, last modified April 13, 2015, accessed April 20, 2015 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Technology.

[2] John Dyer, *From the Garden to the City: The Redeeming and Corrupting Power of Technology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2011), 35.

[3] Dyer, *From the Garden*, 36-42.

[4] Dyer, *From the Garden*, 41.

Technology Itself Is Embedded with Values, Some Helpful and Others Harmful.

Our culture is greatly influenced by technology. Most Americans are very proud

of their country. After the technological boom, the USA became the world leader in

technology. Neil Postman said *"Technopoly is a state of culture. It is also a state of mind.*

It consists in the deification of technology, which means that the culture seeks its

authorization in technology, finds its satisfactions in technology, and takes its orders

from technology."[5] Dr. David Gill argues technology is not good or evil; it is good and

evil. Gill said this: *"Technology is not simply evil, but it is terrible mistake if we give all*

technology a free 'pass' on ethic."[6] So, we know technology cannot just be considered

'neutral', even if technology is just considered to be a tool. The moral quality of

technology really depends on whether their users are good or bad people. With that in

mind, even if we know technology has its own value, for example speeding up the

process, reducing the waiting time and enhancing more productivity, we cannot simply

forget about the dark side of technology. Technology could dominate our life, enslave us

and eventually become our idol, replacing the position of God in our life. Therefore, we

need to know technology is 'good and bad' and be careful in our use of it.

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[5] Neil Postman, *Technolpoly - The Surrender of Culture to Technology* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1993), 71.

[6] David Gill, *"Benchmark Ethics: Is Technology (ever) Evil?" Ethix*, posted December, 1999, 11, accessed January 12, 2013, http://ethix.org/1999/12/01/is-technology-ever-evil.

Biblical Stories of Creation, Fall, Redemption and Restoration Have Deep Connections with Technology.

God is the best technologist in Creation as the narrative of Genesis one suggests. God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God invents new things out of nothing. Creation also gives human beings the role of reflecting God's image and entrusts them with cultivating and keeping the world.[7] Jesus' job was that of a carpenter in New Testament. The Greek word for carpenter is "te,ktwn"(tekton), which shares the same root with the word technology. A carpenter in the first century could be a builder or a crafter. Building or crafting something is about creating technology. Based on these realities, we know that God's four stories involving human beings in Creation, Fall, Redemption and Restoration have a connection with technology in some ways. John Dyer argues technology actually plays an important role in each period of time within the categories of Creation, Fall, Redemption and Restoration either intentionally or unintentionally, with good or bad results.[8] God's creation in the Garden was originally full of everything good. God is a technologist, imparting to Adam the same role as a technologist since Adam was made in the image of God. And we see that Adam was a technologist because of his problem solving skills in naming all the animals. In his work as a technologist, he was responsible for working and keeping God's garden.[9] However, sin came into the world. Adam and Eve did not obey God's commandments. And one of

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[7] Dyer, *From the Garden*, 29.

[8] Dyer, *From the Garden*, 75.

[9] Genesis 2.

the things that occurred right after their rebellion was that Adam 'made' their first set of

clothing.[10] Adam is the first one in the clothing industry. He is making something for the

purpose of covering him and his wife. This new technology of clothing also serves a

spiritual purpose: Adam and his offspring no longer directly walk with God in the

Garden. Instead, they are communicating with God through something else, for example

a dream, a voice, a book or a prophet.[11] As the effects of sin grew in the first family, Cain

killed his brother Abel. From the Biblical accounts, we know that Cain worked the

ground. He also used technology in his work. He also made offerings. But God did not

have favor on his offering. John Dyer pointed out this:

> Just as Adam and Eve showed that they could do technology for good even in
> their sinful state, Cain illustrates that we can do good technology in a faithless,
> sinful way. Cain was following the letter of the law when it came to the culture
> mandate, and externally there was nothing wrong with what he made from the
> world. Yet John and Hebrews tell us God rejected Cain's work for the sole reason
> that it wasn't offered in faith.[12]

Technology is clearly present within the Creation and the Fall. But what role does

technology play within Redemption and Restoration? The story of Noah's ark is a very

good example of redemption. In Genesis 6, Noah built an ark which had a width of 300

cubits, a breadth of 50 cubits and a height of 30 cubits. The ark was absolutely a

technological masterpiece. But who designed the ark? Who was its architect? Who were

the engineers? Did anyone help Noah to draw up a blueprint? The whole project, having

been initiated by God and completed with Noah's hands, demonstrates that technology

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[10] Genesis 3.

[11] Dyer, *From the Garden*, 71.

[12] Dyer, *From the Garden*, 75.

is involved within the work of redemption. Dyer said *"It has become increasingly clear that God has chosen technology and culture to play a role in his plan."*[13] These acts of redemption, through the use of technology, are part of the big plan of God.

In another account of redemption and restoration, Jesus uses technology. In John 21, Jesus restored Peter. As part of this redemptive event, Jesus used a charcoal fire as a tool to prepare a fish breakfast for the disciples. Jesus is using tools, employing technology, in his restorative act. Another example of technological use in redemption and restoration is found in Revelation 21. There we are told that in the new city (the new Jerusalem) there is no need to have the sun or moon shining. The glory of God gives its light and its lamp is the Lamb, both things filling technological roles.[14]

John Dyer gives his conclusion regarding technology's relationship with biblical stories using four-"R"s (Reflection, Rebellion, Redemption and Restoration) like this:

> First, from the story of creation, we found that our ability to make technology is a **reflection** of our Creator. Second, from the fall, we found that every technology has the potential to be used for sin and **rebellion.** But even though tools can be used for rebellion, we found that technology can be used for **redemptive** purposes, temporarily overcoming the effects of the fall and serving the embodied life of Christ in the believer. Thankfully, at the end of the biblical story, we find that God's plans include the **restoration** of all things, including some of the things we make.[15]

Given the above observation regarding the relationship between technology and the biblical stories, we know technology is not irrelevant to God's plan. The next question is how does technology relate to our modern work now?

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[13] Dyer, *From the Garden*, 114.

[14] Revelation 21:23.

[15] Dyer, *From the Garden*, 147.

Working in the Technology Era

Since we are working in the technology era, what do we have to know about the impact of technology on our daily work? I will break down three areas for further discussion: Ethics in Technology, The Meaning of Technological Work and What do we do next?

Ethics and Issues to Be Considered Relating to Technology

Scott Griffin from Seattle Pacific University said *"As a Christian leader in the workplace, my workplace ethics should reflect God's character and purposes."*[16] I cannot agree with him more. And furthermore, because of the technological environment, we need to consider the many impacts of technology on our work from an ethical perspective. For example, software piracy was not an issue thirty years ago. It has become an issue over the past twenty years. For example, two years ago, Microsoft complained that a huge amount of Chinese users were using illegal copies. According to the Business Software Alliance (BSA) news release in May 2012, the proportion of China's personal computers with pirated software installed fell to 77 percent in 2011, a new record low and a decrease of 15 percentage points since 2003.[17] But, think about this: In China, there were 92 people out of 100 who were using illegal software back in 2003. Even today, in 2014, the piracy rate could still be more than 70%. While this is a

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[16] Scott Griffin, "DMin Lectures" (lecture, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, June 2012).

[17] Cyrus Lee, "Report: China's Software Piracy Rate Falls to New Low -- of 77%," ZDNET, accessed March 23, 2104,
http://www.zdnet.com/blog/china/report-chinas-software-piracy-rate-falls-to-new-low-of-77/414.

large problem to Microsoft, when it is compared with other ethical issues, software

piracy is a very simple issue to solve because it is so clear in the Ten Commandments

that 'You shall not steal.'[15] I am not trying to single out this issue in particular. What I am

trying to highlight is that we need to consider some ethical issues regarding working in

the technology era.

I would like to briefly list three additional ethical issues related to technology:

- Monitoring: Recent developments in technology allow companies to have

    very detailed and close monitoring of all their employee's activities. Should

    this kind of monitoring be limited? Could this monitoring really bring more

    productivity when most of the employees are doing the right thing?[18]

- Use of Social media at work: Should a company limit social media use like

    facebook, *twitter*, *wechat*, and *line* for certain work purposes only? People

    are replying more and more on social media to communicate with both

    colleagues within the company and with friends outside the company. With

    the use of social media, tt becomes harder and harder to distinguish when is

    working time and when is personal time. Companies are expecting people to

    connect during evening time and weekend. If people are working in the

    evening and weekend for the company, would it be legitimate for them to use

    social media to deal with some personal things.

- Mobile working environment: With the technological advancements in

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[18] Albert M.Erisman, *"TechWatch: Can Technology Capture a Meeting?"* *Ethix*, posted June 1, 2002, accessed April 28, 2015, http://ethix.org/2002/06/01/can-technology-capture-a-meeting.

internet connectivity and wireless availability, collaborative working from

anywhere with your workgroup has become very easy nowadays. This could

be a good trend for companies to become more family–friendly businesses.[19]

But would an increase in freedom reduce a lot of face-to-face communication

and lead to decrease in team productivity? What is best way to manage the

knowledgeable and connected worker?

Ethical issues are changing rapidly due to the development of technology. It is

harder to draw a clear line between employee's working and personal time now than

before. For Christian workers we have a higher standard for we are considered to work

as if we work for our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, we do not change our.

The Meaning of Technological Work

The church I serve now, the Chinese Bible Church of Greater Lowell, is located in

Chelmsford, Massachusetts. It is very close to the Lowell Connector. Located nearby the

Connector is the Wang Computer headquarters from the 80's. Of course, Wang went out

of business many years ago. But this is the area for many technology companies who are

either starting up their business or who have a branch office to absorb young talent from

the Boston area to work for them. In my church, a 450 member Chinese American

evangelical church, 80% of our members are working in some sort of technologically

focused or dependent job. They are software engineers, semiconductor chip designers,

wireless and telecommunication engineers and defense industry R&D workers; you

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[19] Erisman, *"Can Technology Capture a Meeting?"* accessed April 28, 2015.

name it. This type of work and these types of jobs are the most popular professions in

Taiwan and in China as well. Since they are so involved at both work and church, the

members will ask me, "What is the meaning of my technological job?"

One high-tech Christian describes his perspective on the meaning of his job.

> The world of a high-technology worker is a strange amalgam of the future and
> the past. We work on things that only a small percentage of the population
> understands in organizations that have all the problems and perplexities of any
> other organization. This strange combination gives high-technology work its
> particular complexion. While we work on the cutting edge, we face the same
> ancient issues of other workers. And, if the truth be told, most high-technology
> work is much like any other kind of work: repetitive and mundane.[20]

We can make several key observations from high-tech workers concerning the

meaning of work:

- High-tech work involves some simple problems. But these simple problems
  are very difficult to resolve.[21] It requires a lot of creativity and problem
  solving skills.
- High-tech work sometimes will involve the defense industry.[22] In such work,
  people may have concerns that the products they make could be used in the
  war which may directly or indirectly kill people.
- High-tech work or projects could be a very small part, which is often not an
  end product, within a huge project. Collaboration and integration with other
  teams and other members could be even more important than their own
  project.
- They may create a new product or result which may pose new problems for
  human society.[23]

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[20] Hal Miller, "High Technology Work and the New Creation: Dealing with Intangibles, Ambiguities and
Consequences," in *Faith Goes to Work: Reflections from the Marketplace,* ed. Robert J. Banks (New York,
NY: Alban Institute, 1993), 34.

[21] Miller, "High Technology Work," 34.

[22] Miller, "High Technology Work," 34.

[23] Miller, "High Technology Work," 35.

With these kinds of concerns and issues, what is the value of technological work? Hal Miller said this:

> In some ways, high-technology work is much like God's own creation exnihilo (a Latin phrase meaning "out of nothing"). Computer software starts with nothing and creates its own universe with a few lines of code. That universe might be a kids' alphabet-learning program or a spreadsheet, but the programmers build it from nothing. They tell the new creatures of their universe, the icons and mouse pointers and function keys, what they will do and how they will do it.[24]

Basically, all technological work, like high-technology work, gives others the tools and the context for further creativity. Here is a conclusion for the value or meaning of technological work: It is the same as other types of work, even those not technologically dependent. It is nothing more and nothing less. Those who work with technology are, like others, working for themselves to satisfy their basic needs, express their gifts from God and grow in their spiritual formation. They are working to show their love and care to their families and their neighbors. They are working for God to advance His kingdom.

What Is Next? And Who Is Responsible for Technology?

One of the important questions we need to ask regarding technology is "If technology could be either ethically good or ethically bad, then who should be responsible for technology's developmental direction and usage?"

Dr. David Gill talked about the Christian's use of Technology during a conference at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. He argued that if we use technology as a toolbox, it will be good. On the other hand, if we let technology sit on the throne, then it

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[24] Miller, "High Technology Work,: 36.

becomes idolatry.[25] After he said this, a question was asked: 'What is the line between

toolbox and throne? How can we tell?' Dr. Gill answered the question. "Well, you could

simply ask the people around you. 'Am I spending too much time on *facebook*?' They

will tell you." From this example, we know using facebook as a technology to

communicate with friends could bring ethically different results. However, we know that

technology itself is neither good nor evil.[26] Knowing that technology is ethically neutral,

the next question we might want to ask is: "Who should be responsible for telling us if

the kind of technology we are using is good and another kind of technology is bad?

Furthermore, how do they know the line?"

During my 16 years working as an Information Technology professional in

software companies, like Oracle and Microsoft, I found some interesting realities in the

software industry. If someone told you that he or she is working for a software company,

it could mean variety of things. One person could be using software language to code a

program, while another one could be using some software development tools to do a

similar thing. That is just one of the levels: those who really touch the coding. The next

level could be the configuration level, for the users of enterprise software like SAP, or

Oracle Applications. They are not really coding anything, but they could modify or even

create a special feature in the software through configuration, meaning they go to the

software menu and simply select some things they like. Those software features have

already been created by the software companies. The users just make the decision in the

[25] Gill, "DMin Lectures" (lecture, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, June 2013).

[26] Gill, "*Benchmark Ethics.*"

software to ask whether the features show up or are hidden. The users who know how

to configure the software are called "super users" those who do not know how to

configure the software, are the so-called "general users". So, there are three distinct

kinds of people interacting with software: the programmer, super users and general

users.

One interesting thing is that, while these three kinds of people are all working for

software, their level of involvement with the original design of the software may have

huge differences. I would like to use the above categories to explain how the church

interacts with technology. What I would like to argue here is that for a majority

Christians and churches, there are very few "programmer" level people with

technological expertise. We have very few people who are programming new

technologies specifically for the church. We might have some super users who are

helping the church to configure some existing technology to use in the church. And we

also have many general users who learn to use the technology that someone else

configures for them. A general user's level of involvement with technology may be very

limited. Their experiences with technology could be varied. It could be risky if churches

rely on them to come up with the church's technology strategy. This observation could

be echoed by Dr. Al Erisman's suggestion for church people viewing technology. He

suggested that if you are not 100% familiar with some kind of technology, do not jump

to a conclusion regarding technology too quickly.[27]

This is not too difficult to understand. For example, Christians did not invent the

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[27] Al Erisman, "DMin Lectures" (lecture, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, June 2013).

projector out of necessity. (Although, the inventor of the projector may have been a Christian.) That is to say, the original invention of the projector was not because the church needed a projector. The time sequence of the relationship between the projector and the church is:

1. Someone invented this product to meet a Business and Industry need. (Technology inventors / Programmer Level)

2. Someone saw the product being used in their company and experienced using the projector and felt good about it. (Technology general users)

3. Some Christians in the company experienced using a projector and thought it might be a good idea to have a projector in the church (technology general users in the industry, now become the technology super users in the church)

4. Some Christians saw that the projector was used in the church and experienced using the projector and felt good about it. (Technology general users)

5. The youth pastor used the projector for Bible reading and felt good about it for the first couple months. (Technology general user)

6. The youth pastor who used the projector for group Bible reading found fewer and fewer people who brought their own Bible. The youth pastor started to think that maybe he should not use a projector all the time. (Technology general user becomes a technology super user)

With the above example, I would like to make brief observations and a conclusion here:

- Church attendees are more likely to be technology general users and they are

passively shaped by technology.

- Small numbers of church attendees change from technology general users to super users through their experience of using technology.

- New technology developmental direction is not controlled or managed by Christians or the church.

- Church leaders have often not considered that they themselves should be spending time to know more about the technology used in the church.

- Church leaders need to intentionally move themselves from technology general users to super users.

- Who should be responsible for the use of technology in the church? All the church leaders and technology super users in the church should form a group to manage the role of technology in their church or Christian community.

The church in general has not seriously faced or addressed the problem regarding technology. The situation would be different if a network of Christians concerned about the technological process were developed. By forming a network, Christians everywhere would share a common responsibility together and there would be a higher sense of accountability for those creating technology. Professionals would be working more toward the public good instead of merely being self-serving and haughty.

Having a group of Christians who care about the rapid advancement of technology and who think through the ethical issues would be absolutely beneficial.[28] Through their efforts, we could be assured that technology's use in the church is

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[28] Stephen V. Monsma, *Responsible Technology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996), 222-244.

improving in a positive direction, moving towards a better understanding of God and closeness to Him. Things would be done in response to God's will and they would proceed toward biblically sound ends.

In the Working in the Technology Era section, we discussed three topics, which are ethics issues raising by technology, the meaning of technological work, and who shall be responsible for technology. In the next section, we would like to further discuss about a deeper level concerns for workplace Christians in the technology era. Questions we may want to ask are, for example, with the knowledge of the technology impact to our work and life, what can we do? What are the things we want to do differently? Is it possible we could change the workplace culture toward a direction that may please God?

Toward the Integration Model of Faith at Work within the Technological Workplace

With Jesus' incarnational model for Christians to follow at work, Christians working in the technological workplace could try to work on changing the culture through the three different dimensions of Marketplace culture.

Regarding using the incarnational model within the technological marketplace, we can make assumptions about Christians seeking to change the culture. First, Christians at work have the qualifications that we suggested in the previous section. Therefore, Christians at work are working in the technological marketplace and speak to the world using their language. A Christian at work has the background of knowing technological development, knowing about the product, business rules, sale practices,

service agreements, program logic, business strategy, and so on.

To bring about change, the Christian at work also needs to have in mind the goals of each dimension of culture change. First, the goal of the Cognitive Dimension is to present the fact that this world is not only formed by Technology and Business, but also that God is active. God is present in the world. Second, the goal of the Affective Dimension is to get their co-workers to have an initial impulse for drawing close to God. This is done so that eventually their co-workers will experience God for themselves. Third, the goal of the Evaluative Dimension is to transform people's heart so that they are capable of moral decision making. In fact, moral decision making should start from Christians since morality comes from God. These three dimensions of culture changing are very complicated. They usually work together in the culture changing process.

Pray for Good Timing in Evangelism and Discipleship

Given the complications involved in culture change, the first challenge is found in the cognitive dimension: How can you explain to others that God is in the technological world? Really, it is very hard. People automatically question this "God is in the world' statement by categorizing it into ineffective communication. It is not necessary for them to believe that God exists. Moreover, the belief that God is in the world violates the value system of the 'Continuous Excellence and Success' principle. Talking about God? It is not high-tech. It doesn't have anything to do with business today. It is not related to any improvement or success. Therefore, it is very hard to simply explain the reality that God is in the world. "Evangelism" is needed, but evangelism alone is not enough. This is

the same situation for workplace "Discipleship." It is always a big surprise that there are many Christians at work who do not share their faith openly. Many of them consider themselves to be believers but not disciples of Christ. But discipleship cannot happen automatically. We may need to talk about this topic during a suitable opportunity. Pray for suitable opportunities. It could be a lunch time when people are curious about why you pray before you eat your lunch. In that moment, you can talk about God. It could be during a weekend, at an unofficial company gathering. It could be at an Award ceremony when you have chance to appreciate someone. It could be during the time you spend travelling with one of your colleagues. Pray for the opportunity as Esther did for her people before she went in before the face of King Ahasuerus. She had been reminded by her cousin, "And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"[29]

To bring about a change in the culture towards Christianity, we need to proclaim the fact that this is God's world. But, evangelism and discipleship is only one of the aspects used to present this fact. "Ethics" is another presentation tool. A working Christian may demonstrate a higher standard of business Ethics which could draw the attention of other people. They may ask you why you want to act in such a way, since it may result in a more difficult situation. For example, if you are a large corporate marketing manager, is it always good for you to spend corporate approved marketing money to invite your customer to join a free of charge conference event at an expensive resort? You may say, well, it is OK to just give them a free ticket to the conference event.

[29] Esther 4:14.

Then, what if the conference event lasts for 5 days and the resort fee is really expensive, is it OK? How about treat them more dinners and free golf tour after the conference? You could keep on and on. But, where is the line? When does it considered to be merely spending the marketing money? And when does it begin to be considered bribery?

Another good example for developing exemplary business ethics would be Dr. David Gill's talk about "the first four principles of highly ethical people." Dr. Gill pointed out the following four points in his lecture:[30]

1. *Treat all people as unique, valuable, irreplaceable individuals.* Never treat anyone as worthless, dispensable, or "just a number."

2. *Support the freedom, growth, and development of others.* Never view anyone through stereotypes and images, or as fixed and unchangeable.

3. *Communicate to others by name with respect.* Never ignore people---or use demeaning, trivializing names/labels.

4. *Work hard for people and spend time with them.* Don't just work and play for yourself ---and don't get unbalanced.

Dr. Gill then continued to explain how these four principles come from the Ten Commandments. This is the rationale: these are the top four ways that God wants to be treated with love and with justice. All people are made in the image and likeness of God. Therefore, how God wants us to treat him, we must treat in the same way people who are made in God's image. For example, the first commandment is "You shall have no other gods before me." With that in mind, we shall treat all the people as unique,

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[30] Gill, "DMin Lectures" (lecture, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, June 2010).

valuable, irreplaceable individuals. And we shall never treat anyone as worthless, dispensable, or "just a number." Likewise, we could apply the second commandment "You shall never make for yourself an idol" to the second principle. And so forth for the third and fourth commandments.[31]

In addition to Evangelism, Discipleship and Ethics, we could use "Experience" to influence the Technological Marketplace Culture. The "Experience" quadrant is involved with questions like vocation selection, calling, meaning and purpose in and through our marketplace professions.[32] Christians are not the only ones to ask about the meaning and purpose of technological work. Many non-Christians ask the same questions when they are facing a layoff, searching for a new job, experiencing company relocation or corporate re-organization and so forth. After I left Microsoft, I received many requests through my personal MSN account[33] and facebook from non-Christian friends to talk about their changing job situations. My understanding of the meaning of work comes from the Bible. Because of this, I would inevitably or intentionally talk about God's perceptive regarding work, especially technological work. When I talked about the Christian perspective of the meaning of work, many times the Holy Spirit worked in their heart as well. Again, pray for the opportunity to speak for God through sharing your "Experience", as a way to point people to God.

The main type of change aimed at pointing others to God comes through the

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[31] Gill, "Lecture Notes."

[32] David Miller, God at Work (Oxford, UK: Oxford University, 2007), 135.

[33] MSN (Microsoft Network) Messenger was pretty popular in 2003-2009. However, my personal MSN has not been working since 2010.

final "Enrichment" category, which is often inward and personal in nature, involving issues like healing, prayer, meditation, consciousness, transformation, and self-actualization.[34] Many other religions, such as New Age, Buddhist, etc., may also focus a lot on this part. Therefore, it could be problematic for Christians to focus on it. However, we shall not withdraw from it. Instead, we need to participate in this aspect of culture change in a biblical way. In the final days, many false prophets will appear. They will also demonstrate some powers. We cannot escape facing these kinds of challenges so we may confront them in the spiritual warfare.

Resources in professional therapies and team work with professional Christian fellowships are needed. Resources like Christian counseling can provide help to people experiencing heavy stress and depression. Professional Christian fellowship may provide spiritual healing through group prayer and comfort. People engaged in the Enrichment quadrant may be heavily involved with Affective Dimension changing. Following this type of change, Cognitive change and Evaluative change could also be achieved at a later stage.

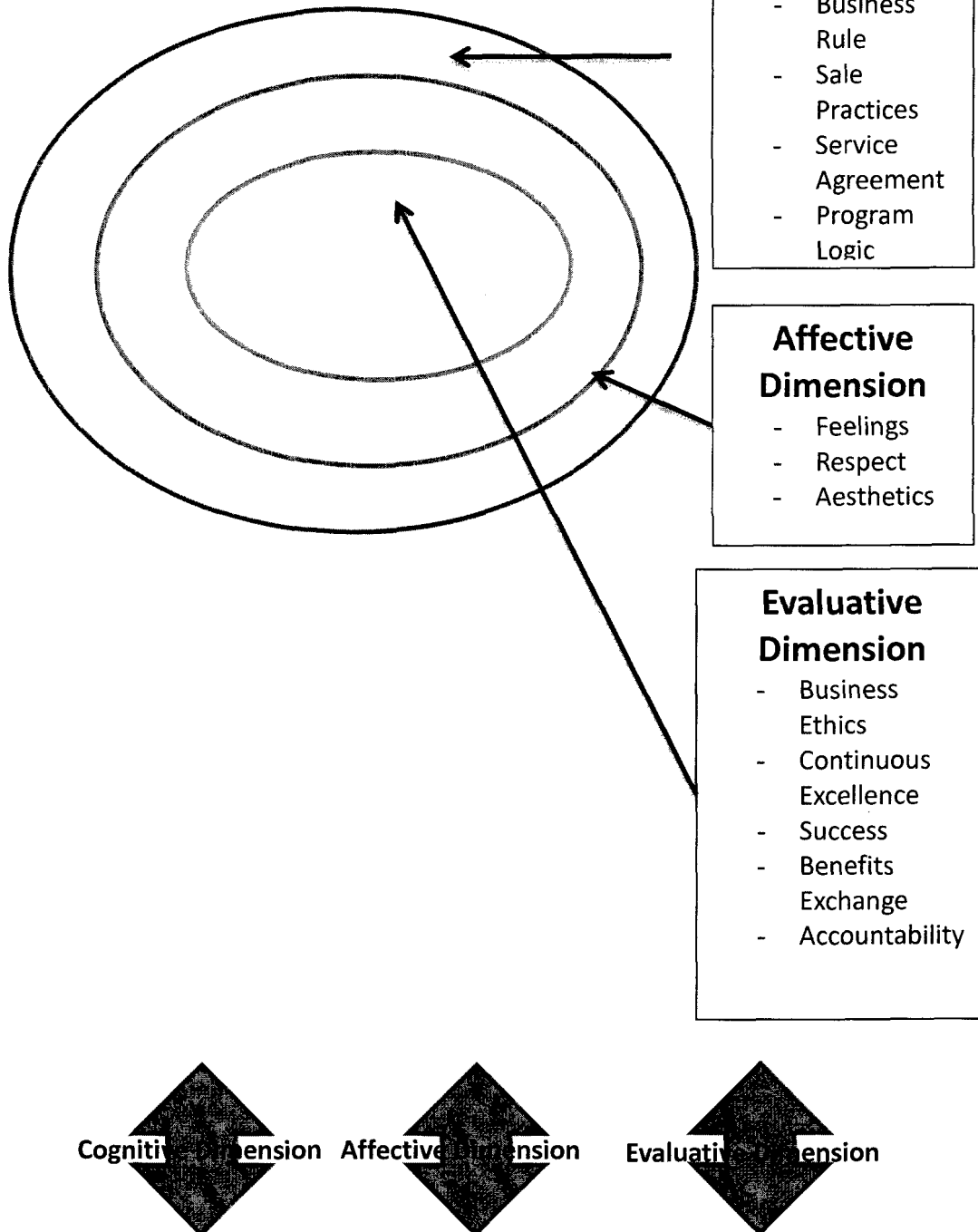## A Short Conclusion for Changing the Technological Culture

Christians at work are living in two different culture systems: Marketplace Culture and Christian Culture. To be God's ambassador in the marketplace, a Christian needs to follow Jesus' model to be a bridge for the gap between God and the world. We are the

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[34] Miller, *God at Work*, 137.

transcultural mediators.[35] We are the culture changers. Our proposed model is to

provide Christians at work and church leaders another perspective to minister in the 21st

Century Promised Land, the unconquered technological marketplace. See the figure

below.

[35] Paul Hiebert, *The Gospel in Human Contexts: Anthropological Explorations for Contemporary Missions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2009), 185.

Three Dimensions of Marketplace Culture

Cognitive Dimension
- Product Knowledge
- Business Rule
- Sale Practices
- Service Agreement
- Program Logic

Affective Dimension
- Feelings
- Respect
- Aesthetics

Evaluative Dimension
- Business Ethics
- Continuous Excellence
- Success
- Benefits Exchange
- Accountability

Cogniti ension Affectiv nsion Evaluati ension

The Integration Model of Christian at Work

| Ethics | Evangelism |

Local Tradition
Church Tradition
Bible
God
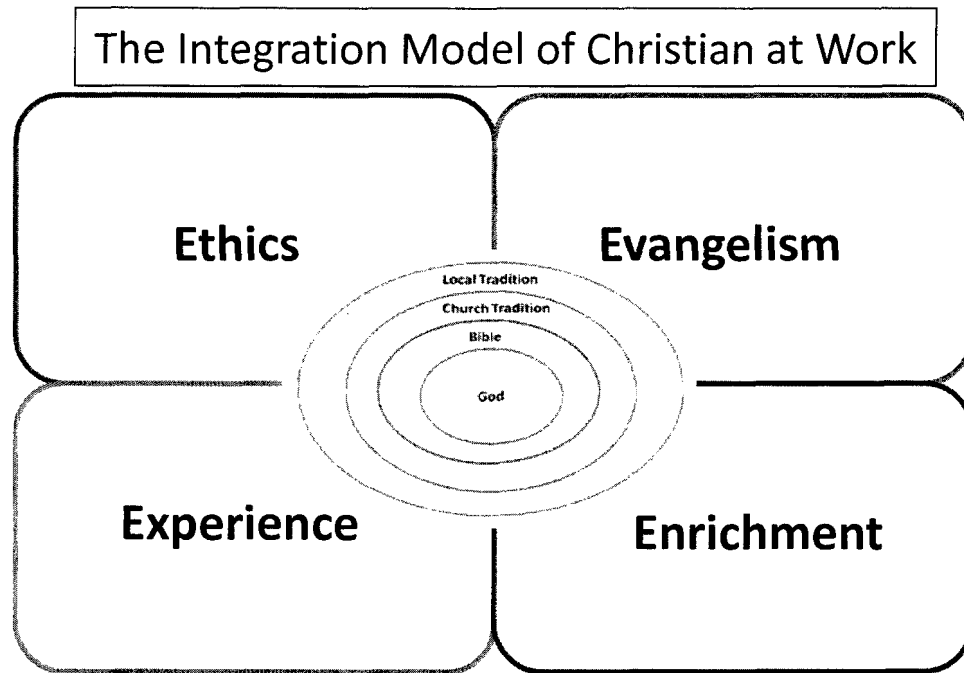
| Experience | Enrichment |

Figure 3. A Visual Model of the Transformation of Technological Marketplace
Culture Through the Integration of Faith at Work

Theology of Work

In part A of chapter two, we addressed the urgent need for Chinese Christians to know about the role of technology in God's plan. We also talked about what we could do to bring about culture change as technological Christian workers. Although we have discussed some of the biblical perspective regarding technology, further understanding of God's purpose for work is also needed. In part B of chapter two, we argue that understanding the meaning of work is another key for the Chinese Christian to live out their faith in the technology era. We will try to construct a very clear and concise theology of work. Here are the five points of theology of work that we would like to propose:

1. God works, so we work

2. Sin entered the world and left work broken

3. Jesus brings redemption to the brokenness of work

4. We are God's co-workers

5. Why Work?

Foundational for the theology of work is the question: How do we know the meaning of work? We will start the quest into the theology of work beginning with the definition of work.

The Definition of Work

What is work? According to the Oxford Dictionary definition, work as a noun is 'Activity involving mental or physical effort done in order to achieve a purpose or

result.'[36] From the Oxford Dictionary definition, we could easily come up with two main points here for work: Work has a purpose to achieve and work requires that effort is spent.

There are not too many words in the Bible related to work. In the Old Testament Hebrew, we find three words – (מַעֲשֶׂה), (מְלָאכָה), and (עָשָׂה). In the New Testament Greek, we find (κοπιάω) and (ἔργον). The first word, Hebrew (מַעֲשֶׂה) ma'ᵃśeh (181 times), is 'an act', 'a doing' (cf. Gn. 5:29; Ex. 5:4, etc., and especially in the Psalms of God's action, see Pss. 8:3, 6; 19:1, etc.); (מַעֲשֶׂה) also refers to deeds or things done by man.[37] One possible meaning is accomplishment. It sometimes refers to the final result of laboring. This word is translated many times in the English Bible to refer to professional work, a job. For example, in Exodus 5:13 "The slave drivers kept pressing them, saying, "Complete the work (מַעֲשֵׂיכֶם) required of you for each day, just as when you had straw."[38] Here in Exodus 5:13 (מַעֲשֵׂיכֶם) is a plural form of (מַעֲשֶׂה), meaning multiple works, but also the Israelite's professional jobs. It is the same word in Genesis 47:3 "Pharaoh said to his brothers, "What is your occupation (מַעֲשֵׂיכֶם)?"[39]

The second word, Hebrew (מְלָאכָה) mᵉlā'ḵā (117 times; cf. Gn. 2:2–3; Ex. 20:9, etc.), is 'a deed'. (מְלָאכָה) is a noun that refers to business, work, a job or a task. It is

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[36] "Definition of Work", Oxford Dictionary, accessed March 20, 2015, http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/work?q=work.

[37] F. Brown, S. R. Driver, & C. A. Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon,* electronic ed. (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, 2000).

[38] Exodus 5:13.

[39] Genesis 47:3.

especially used to describe God's work as something done or made. We find this word

referring to God's creation in Genesis 2:2.[40]

The third Hebrew word for work (עָשָׂה) means to make, to produce, or to

construct. Sometimes, it means to use some creativity, make something into something

else, give the value of a thing, or complete a certain kind of thing. "It represents 'an act',

'a doing' (cf. Gn. 5:29; Ex. 5:4, etc., and especially in the Psalms of God's act, see Pss.

8:3, 6; 19:1, etc.)."[41] We need to be careful when we search the word "work" in the

Bible because different passages mean different things: in Genesis 47:4, it is

'occupation;' in Genesis 31:1, it is 'to gain wealth;' in Exodus 31:17, it is translated 'made

the heaven and earth;' in Numbers 17:26, it is 'to do God's commandments;' and in

Deuteronomy 26:7, it is 'labor and toil.' The list could go on and on.

In New Testament Greek, we found two words for work: (κοπιάω) is a verb and

(ἔργον) is a noun. First, the verb (κοπιάω) has different expressions in classical Greek and

biblical Greek. It refers to the weariness which labor produces in the classical Greek,

however, in biblical Greek, it refers to the toil itself.[42] It also means to 'become tired' in

John 4:6 and Revelation 2:3. In Matthew 11:28, οἱ κοπιῶντες, reads as *those who are*

exhausted.[43]

Second, the word work as a noun, (ἔργον) *ergon* (142 times) is found frequently

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[40] *BDB.*

[41] D. R. W. Wood & I. H. Marshall, *New Bible Dictionary,* 3rd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1996), 1247.

[42] Wood and Marshall, *NBD,* 1248.

[43] H. R. Balz, and G. Schneider, *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990), 307.

in the books of John, Hebrews, James and Revelation.[44] Work (**ἔργον**) in Greek has the

definition: that which displays itself in activity of any kind, deed, [or] action.[45]

This is also the same word in the Septuagint (LXX) version of Genesis about God's

work in creation. Genesis 2:2 *"And on the seventh day God finished his work (ἔργα) that*

he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work (e;rgwn) that he had

done."[46] At the same time, we find this word (ἔργον) used in the New Testament for

man's work and deeds. For example, in Matthew 5:16, Jesus said *"In the same way, let*

your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works (ἔργα) and give

glory to your Father who is in heaven."[47] Man's work should reflect the good character

of God, so that it will give glory to God the Father. Therefore, we could say the Greek

word (ἔργον), when used to refer to God's activity and man's, is interchangeable

between the two. Both works are have the same goal. Work is itself a God-ordained

thing.[48]

As we study the word of 'work', we find there are two general groups of meaning.

On one hand, work sometimes means something we do not love to do but we have the

responsibility to do. It is even a hardship and toil. But, on the other hand, 'work' in the

Bible has a positive meaning. These works bring you joy – a meaningful, creative, sense

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[44] H. D. McDonald, "Work," in *New Bible dictionary,* 3rd ed., D. R. W. Wood, I. H. Marshall, A. R. Millard, J. I. Packer & D. J. Wiseman, eds. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1996), 1247–1248.

[45] W. Arndt, and F. W. Danker, & W. Bauer, *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature,* 3rd ed. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago, 2000), 390.

[46] Genesis 2:2.

[47] Matthew 5:16.

[48] McDonald et al., *NBD,* 1248.

of accomplishment. The first group consists of words with very negative associations

paired to 'work', such as: hard, painful, unwilling, was forced to as slaves, etc.; the

second group includes words with positive associations paired to 'work', such as: if you

can do a good work, it would be joyful, meaningful, would carry a sense of creativity or a

sense of accomplishment. To summarize, a 'work' in people's life seems to have two

different kinds of impact. On the one hand, work is full of purpose and value. It is

significant. It can bring satisfaction and joy. However, on the other hand, work could

bring pain and trouble.

With this understanding of what work is and these connotations regarding work,

we can move on to the first pillar of the Theology of Work: God works, so we work.

God Works, So We Work

God is a worker. His first work is creation. He creates the world. In the very

beginning of the Bible, in Genesis 1:1, we see proof of this: "In the beginning, God

created the heavens and the earth."[49] God's first work is the creation of the world,

including the heavens and the earth. He is the first worker and the best worker.

"'Created' (bārā') is used in the Old Testament consistently in reference to a new activity.

The striking feature of the word is that its subject is always God. It therefore conveys the

idea of a special activity accomplished only by deity that results in newness or a

renewing."[50] Here, we would like to emphasize it is God who starts the work. God is the

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[49] Genesis 1:1.

[50] K. A. Mathews, *Genesis 1-11:26*, NAC (Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1996), 128.

initiator. He is the origin of work. We human beings are created by God in His image. In other words, we are a kind of copy of God with some of His image, although not all of His image. We are similar to God. We can draw some conclusions from this reality: we work because we are created by God to work in his creation, working with Him and working for Him. Genesis opens with the image of a working, collaborative Creator, whose primary work constitutes an investment of His creativity, intelligence, words, breath, and "hands."[51] So, we know working is part of God's character and his nature. Because human beings are the only creatures made in God's image, we, as human beings are invited by God to be workers as well. Because He works, we are working as well. Actually, this is what we see from Genesis 1:26-28: *"Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."*[52] In 1:26, God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," *"which show[s] the peculiar importance of the work to be done, the formation of a creature, who was to be God's representative, clothed with authority and rule as visible head and monarch of the world."*[53] So, it is very clear that we are God's representatives to work for and in his created world. So the next questions we need to ask are: What is God's work? And what is man's work?

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[51] S. D. Laing, and C. Br, C. Draper, A. England, S. Bond, E. R. Clendenen & T. C. Butler, eds., *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (Nashville, TN: Broadman, 2003), 1683.

[52] Genesis 1:26.

[53] R. Jamieson and A. R. Fausset, & D. Brown, *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, 1997).

If we have a quick review of what God did in Genesis, we could summarize God's works to the following:[54] Planning and Creation, Evaluation and Assessment, Beauty and Function, Collaborative Activity, Delegation, Excellence, Continuing Value, Rest and Setting Boundaries. We will elaborate more details below.

1. Planning and Creation: We have plenty of passages that speak to God's creation in Genesis. But how do they show God's planning? Genesis 1:26 suggests God's planning work. *"Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."*[55] The plural *"We"* was regarded by the fathers and earlier theologians almost unanimously as indicative of the Trinity.[56] This implies that the divine council plans the work before the actual creative activity.

2. Evaluation and Assessment: The first of God's evaluation and assessments in Scripture is found in Genesis 1:4 *"God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness."*[57] Similar evaluation and assessments can also be found in Genesis 1:10, 1:12, 1:18, 1:21, 1:25, and 1:31. God saw that his creation was good. It is a very clear evaluation and assessment. On

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[54] Al Erisman, "Lecture Notes," (lecture, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, 2011).

[55] Genesis 1:26.

[56] Keil, C. F. and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996).

[57] Genesis 1:4.

the other hand, when Adam and Eve were tempted by the serpent, "Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil."[58] Genesis 3:22a suggests God also provided his evaluation and assessment on the fall of man.

3. Beauty and Function: In Genesis 3:21 *The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them."*[59] Obviously, God makes something pretty and functionally good for Adam and Eve – clothes.

4. Collaborative Activity: The members of the Trinity work collaboratively in Creation (Genesis 1:26). God also invites man to work collaboratively with him (Genesis 1:28).

5. Delegation: God tasks Adam to name the animals and to rule over them.[60]

6. Excellence: In Genesis 1:31 "God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good."[61] God made his creation perfectly.

7. Continuing Value: In Genesis 1:28, God instructs Adam and Eve "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth."[62] God's charge to Adam and Eve and their descendants to subdue

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[58] Genesis 3:22.

[59] Genesis 3:21.

[60] Genesis 2:19 and 1:28.

[61] Genesis 1:31.

[62] Genesis 1:28.

and to rule over his creation is to given to sustain the world. He called them to manage the creation according to His plan. God's value is love and righteousness. In Psalm 36:10, "O continue Your loving kindness to those who know You, And Your righteousness to the upright in heart."[63] God's original plan was to ask Adam and Eve continuing his love and righteousness to his creation.

8. Rest: God not only worked but he also rested. In Genesis 2:2 *"By the seventh day God completed His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done."*[64] God completed his creation and rested on the seventh day.

9. Setting Boundaries: In Genesis 2:8, *"The LORD God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there He placed the man whom He had formed."*[65] God set a boundary for the Garden in which He placed the man to live.

In short summary: God's work makes His creation prepared for man to live and work within it. How about man's work? Based on the creation accounts, we can summarize Man's work to the following: Be fruitful and multiply, Rule over the earth, Tend the garden, Name the animals, and Live within the new boundaries. These activities are elaborated below.

1. Be Fruitful and Multiply: This is the commandment from God for man to

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[63] Psalm 36:10.

[64] Genesis 2:2.

[65] Genesis 2:8.

reproduce, to have young children, to increase the numbers of humans. This is very important as we can see it is repeated in both Genesis 1:22 and 1:28.

2. Rule over the earth: Human beings are assigned by God as "caretakers" for the whole earth. This is a privilege as well as a responsibility.[66]

3. Tend the garden: In Genesis 2:15, *"The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it."*[67] God asks Adam to work and keep the garden.

4. Name the animals: In Genesis 2:19, *"Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name."*[68] God also gives Adam a task, a job to do, which is to name all the animals.

5. Live within the new boundaries: In Genesis 3:23-24, God drove Adam and Eve out of Garden, away from his presence. God placed them East of the Garden of Eden. From that point, Adam and Eve lived in the new boundaries that God gave them and Adam needed to work the ground. *The means and extent of access to God's presence was altered because of sin, but divine mercy overtook the wayward man and woman.*[69]

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[66] K. A. Mathews, *Genesis 1-11:26*, NAC (Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1996), 174-175.

[67] Genesis 2:15.

[68] Genesis 2:19.

[69] Mathews, *Genesis 1-11:26*.

To Summarize: Work was God's purpose for man from the beginning. This is even set forth in Psalm 104:19–24 and Isaiah 28:23–29 as a provision of divine wisdom. The fact that work forms an integral part of the divine purpose for man is implied in the fourth commandment. In Exodus 20:8-11, we read "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God; *on it* you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy."[70] It is God's command for human beings to work and to rest under his plan and design. Therefore, we work because God works.

Genesis chapter 3 is a changing point. After Adam and Eve fell from grace into guilt, work fell from blessing to brokenness. The Second pillar of the Theology of Work we propose is 'Sin entered the world and left work broken.'

Sin Entered the World and Left Work Broken

Whoever lives in the modern world has likely felt that work is not easy. To find a job is not easy. To keep a job is not easy. And to do a job well is not easy. All of this may lead us to ask this question: 'Is work a curse?'[71] It is a very common feeling that we experience many difficulties at work. But, what does Bible say about this? Gen. 3:17-19

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[70] Exodus 20:8 –11.

[71] Rose West, *Go to Work and Take Your Faith Too!* (Macon, GA: Peake Road, 2007), 20.

sheds some light on this problem: "And to Adam he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return."[72]

We need to read Genesis 3:17-19 very carefully. Work itself was not cursed. It is 'the ground' that was cursed not 'work'. God curses the ground as a result of Adam and Eve's rebellion. Of course, when God cursed the ground, work was impacted. Work became difficult as the curse altered the created order. However, work itself is not cursed. We have to reiterate that work is not the result of the fall; it is the difficulty of work in a fallen world that is emphasized here. And so we conclude: 'Sin entered the world and left work broken.'

We can elaborate the brokenness of work with more detail. Sin left our work broken in three areas:

1. The Break between Humankind and God

2. The Break within Humankind

3. The Break between Humankind and its work

All of the difficulties in our work can be traced to sin.[73] The most important factor in the brokenness of work is the loss of integrity. Before sin came, the relationship

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[72] Genesis 3:17–19.

[73] Erisman, "Lecture Notes."

between Man and God was all good. Adam and Eve were working within God's design. They trusted God and had faith in Him. They did not lose their integrity prior to the fall. However, after their rebellion, Adam and Eve were separated from God. They tried to live under their own authority. All relationships were and are broken after sin entered the world.

1. The Break between Humankind and God: The separation between humankind and God means humankind is no longer connected with God, the ultimate source of life. In Genesis 3:8, we see Adam and Eve were trying to hide themselves from God. They were afraid to see God. Death became the destiny of humankind. How this impacted work was that humankind's work was no longer under God's authority. The exploitation of other people became a normal thing. The same thing happened with the environment and humankind made destructive products.

2. The Break within Humankind: The broken relationships between human beings can be traced back to Adam and Eve's finger pointing. Genesis 3:11-12 shows us: "And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?" The man said, "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."[74] Adam did not admit his fault when God asked him about his disobedience. Adam first blamed God for his wrong choice, and then he blamed Eve. You see no integrity in Adam's heart after the fall. Not only was Adam broken, but

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[74] Genesis 3:11–12.

also Adam and Eve's relationship with one another was broken; their relationship turned into blame-shifting, deceit and selfishness. In Genesis chapter four, we can also see that the relationship between the first two brothers, Cain and Abel, was broken as well. This brokenness within relationships between all human beings lasts even today. In today's modern workplace, you could find the poor treatment of customers and suppliers. It comes as no surprise that the employees are poorly treated. Office politics, resulting in poor treatment of employees by employees, are everywhere in every company.

3. The Break between Humankind and its work: We have found the brokenness in the relationship between God and humankind and within humankind itself. We can also find that our relationship with the rest of creation, especially our work, is broken. As we have discussed before, God gave Adam the stewardship of His creation in Genesis 1:28. After the fall, the ground was cursed. Adam had to toil with sweat to sustain life, as we can see in Genesis 3:17-19. The working relationship was and is changed. The difficulty of work has increased. Work has become toilsome, as the joy of work originally designed by God was turned into 'the grind.' Work has also become hard, as Genesis 3:19 says:

"By the sweat of your face you will eat bread, till you return to the ground."[75]

As we trust in our labor more than trust in God, we gradually distort God's intention

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[75] Genesis 3:19.

for work. We very often live at the edge of two extreme situations. Sometimes, we

are very driven to work, like a workaholic. And at other times, we are very lazy.

Knowing that sin has broken our work along with our relationships, what is God's

plan for our work after the fall? To answer this question, we would like to introduce our

third point regarding the theology of work.

Jesus Brings Redemption to the Brokenness of Work

Adam and Eve fell short, but God did not just stop there and do nothing. Right

after sin had entered this world, God promised deliverance for human beings from the

power of Satan, saying to the serpent in Genesis 3:15: And I will put enmity between you

and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you

will strike his heel."[76]

This is the first hint of salvation. Dr. Gordon Hugenberger from Gordon-Conwell

Theological Seminary argues Genesis 3:15 is the prototype of the Gospel.[77] God

declared the judgment of the devil and, at the same time, he prepared the plan for

redemption. God sent His beloved son, Jesus, to defeat sin and death. He also paid the

ransom price for us. No matter if it is before the fall or after, work is and has always been

an important part of God's purpose and plan. Even after the fall, God never turned away

and became uninvolved in our lives and our work. It is true that, because Adam and Eve

sinned, men have suffered eternal punishment and separation from God. Romans 6:23,

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[76] Genesis 3:15.

[77] Gordon Hugenberger, "Class Notes," (lecture, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, June 2008).

says this: "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."[78] But just as the effects of sin are so deep and powerful, God's redemption plan is equally powerful and thorough to bring restoration to His original plan of working with human beings in His creation. This original plan is hinted at in Ephesians 2:15 when Paul says: "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them."[79]

One of the most important things that Jesus has done for us is that he has restored our relationship with God, with people and with works. Why is Jesus the originator of redemption? Why doesn't redemption come from something else or someone else? Colossians 1:16 says "For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.[80] Since the world is created by him, through him and for him, he is the one who really cares for us and was willing and able to pay the price of death for us. Colossians 1:20 continues "and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross."[81] Therefore, we know that the redemption of the world has come through Jesus, so that God's work will continue to proceed.

Jesus Christ's work is to heal the brokenness of our relationship with God, the

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[78] Romans 6:23.

[79] Ephesians 2:10.

[80] Colossians 1:16.

[81] Colossians 1:20.

brokenness of our relationship with each other, and the brokenness of our relationship with our work. We have to be aware that we are currently living in the period between Jesus' first coming and his second coming. The world has been temporarily ruled by the evil power, however, since Jesus came around 2000 years ago, the kingdom of God has already come. The kingdom of God has "already come but [is] not yet completed." The redemption work of Jesus Christ has already started, yet it is not 100% completed. We are in the middle of the two overlapping ages and we are invited to join Jesus' redemptive work.

We Are God's Co-workers

To understand that we are God's coworkers, we need to return to the creation narrative again. In Genesis one, the world was created by God. He created the world in six days and rested on the seventh day. We know that God is the God of work. But, we need to remember that when we talk about the God of work, we are talking about the Triune God. Each person within the Trinity works. In John 5:17, "Jesus said to them, 'My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working.'" Not only did Jesus do divine work, Jesus also had a profession. Jesus was known as a carpenter in his hometown.[82] How about the third person of God, the Holy Spirit? In John 14:26 Jesus said "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you."[83] The Holy

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[82] Mark 6:3.

[83] John 14:26.

Spirit not only works as a teacher to Christians, but also a transformer. In John 15:8-11, we know that the Holy Spirit convicts Christians of sin to conform them to Jesus' likeness. Just as each person of the Trinity has a unique role to play, in God's creation, man enjoys a very unique status. Man is created to be a co-worker with God. In Genesis 1:28, God told Adam and Eve: "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." God asked man basically to work on two things: first, to be fruitful and multiply; and second, to subdue and rule over the world. "The command to subdue the earth and to work in the Garden of Eden ordained human labor."[84] This is the first time that human beings are invited to co-work with God. As they co-work with God, man's work is an imitation of God's work, since human's have the image of God. After the fall, sin entered the world. The relationship between mankind and work was broken. We are waiting for the redemption of creation as Romans 8:22 says "We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time."[85]

Jesus came and died on the cross and gave his life for us. After his resurrection, he himself appeared to his disciples and gave them further work to accomplish in the Great Commission. In Matthew 28:18-20, Jesus said to them and to all of us who are his coworkers: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore

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[84] Gene Edward Veith Jr., *God At Work – Your Christian Vocation in All of Life* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2002), 62.

[85] Romans 8:22.

and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the

Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.

And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."[86]

How can we be God's coworkers? First Corinthians 3:9 says, "For we are God's

fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building."[87] I think when Paul said this in

Corinthians Church, he talked about himself, Apollos, and God working for the same

purpose. They were building up the Corinthian Christians. They are God's field and God's

building, meaning Paul, Apollos and God all worked to make the spiritual life of the

Corinthian Christians into a life grow. This is the same for us today as well. We are working

with God to grow his church through the Holy Spirit. God promised to send the Holy Spirit

to live through us. So, while we live, we are living with Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit.

While we walk, we are walking with Jesus Christ through Holy Spirit. And while we work,

we are working with Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit. That is what Paul explains "For

we are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will make my dwelling among them

and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."[88]

So, our conclusion here is that we are God's co-workers at work. We were

created to be God's co-worker. Sin entered the world and changed our prestigious

relationship with God, and our relationships with each other and with our works.

However, through Jesus' redemption, we are able to return to God's original design and

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[86] Matthew 28:18-20.

[87] 1 Corinthians 3:9.

[88] 2 Corinthians 6:16.

co-work with Him. What is the purpose of God's design to let us to co-work with Him?

This brings us to the last point of my Theology of Work proposal: Work is given to

human beings so that we could have abundant life.

Why Work?

Paul Stevens had a seminar in which he talked to a group of Chinese Christians

about Workplace Spirituality in Taipei, Taiwan in 2010. During the seminar, he asked the

question "why work?" and gave the following 7 reasons:

1. We work for survival
2. We work for identity and meaning
3. We work for love
4. We work for service
5. We work for growth
6. We work for the Kingdom that will last forever
7. We work for God[89]

I agree with all seven of the reasons that Paul Stevens' gives for work. However, I

think it would be more concise to make them into just three overarching reasons. Here is

my proposal:

1. We work for ourselves
2. We work for others
3. We work for God

Why do I propose these three reasons? Well, it goes without saying that we love

ourselves. For the other two reasons, we need to look no further than Mark 12:28-31,

where it says:

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[89] R. Paul Stevens, *Spiritual Fire at Workplace Seminars* (Taipei, Taiwan: Campus Books, 2010).

One of the scribes came and heard them arguing, and recognizing that He had answered them well, asked Him, "What commandment is the foremost of all?" Jesus answered, "The foremost is, 'HEAR, O ISRAEL! THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD; AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.' "The second is this, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' There is no other commandment greater than these."[90]

Out of all the OT laws, the foremost important commandment is to love God and obey Him wholeheartedly. But, God commands us to love our neighbors as we love ourselves. So, we work for the three major persons we love and are called to love: ourselves, our neighbors (namely others), and God.

Let me elaborate more on these three points:

1. We work for ourselves: I combined Paul Stevens' 1st, 2nd and 5th reasons into one bigger reason. There are multiple ways we work for ourselves. We work for ourselves to meet basic physical needs. We work to pursue and express our gifts and talents. We also work so that we can continue to grow in our journey toward sanctification and spiritual formation.

2. We work for others: This combines Paul Stevens' 3rd and 4th reasons. We work for the love of our family, our dependents. On a visit to Thailand, I and my fellow students visited many NGOs in Chiang Mai. We saw that a lot of people travelled to Chiang Mai to work for the prevention of prostitution, human trafficking, and poverty. So, another common reason for work is that we work to help others in need. For many of the volunteers, they are working to

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[90] Mark 12:28–31.

contribute to their neighbors, making the world a better place and serving

kingdom of God.

3. We work for God: I put Paul Stevens' 6th and 7th points together. We are

    working for God and for His kingdom which will last forever. We talked about

    this point in previous sections. We work to share in God's comprehensive

    work of creation, redemption and consummation. We do work God's way and

    for God, with faith, hope and love. We work to share the Gospel of Jesus

    Christ.

We have concluded the meaning of work in Theology part B by providing a 5-

point theology of work. Now, we are going to add one more dimension, technology, in

order to discuss the impact of Technology on our life and work, and see that we might

need to shape a little bit of the theology of work in regard to Chinese Christians.

Theology of Culture and Contextualization

Theology of Culture

In Chapter one, we discussed the definition of Culture. We borrowed the idea

from Hiebert. His definition of culture is "the more or less integrated systems of ideas,

feelings and values and their associated patterns of behaviors and products shared by a

group of people who organize and regulate what they think, feel and do."[91] What does

the Bible say about culture? Many examples of Theology of Culture can be found in the

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[91] Paul Hiebert, *Anthropological Insight for Missionaries* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1985), 30.

Bible. Daniel is one of the best examples. He went from Jerusalem to join in the

Babylonian system. Yet, he was able to maintain his distinctive cultural witness in his

prayer life, in his dietary and his work ethics with kings and his colleagues. Living in a

new and high level cultural environment, Daniel and his friends demonstrated that

preserving an integrated system of ideas, feelings and values from God is possible.

Theology of Culture is trying to close the gap as Paul Tillich said, *"the fateful gap*

between religion and culture, thus reconciling concerns which are not strange to each

other, but have been estranged from each other."[92] This is why we need to address the

importance of contextualization workplace theology in the technology era for Chinese

Christians.

Contextualization

We would like to move on to the third part of our theology of work in the

Technology era for the Chinese Church and Chinese Christians, which is the

contextualization of theology. Contextualization is important. Why? I would like to

borrow Paul R. Stevens' words on Contextualization:

> We are doing theology and not merely repeating Scripture but engaging the
> timeless Word of God and the contemporary culture/situation at the same time.
> Doing theology is an ellipse, with two foci: the timeless Word of God and the
> contemporary situation. Therefore doing a theology of work as with other
> dimensions of theology is a continuous process.[93]

This is true. The Gospel is timeless. The Theology of Work is timeless. But we

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[92] Paul Tillich, *Theology of Culture* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1964).
[93] Paul R. Stevens, "Toward a Contextualized Theology of Work for Asia" (unpublished research paper), 2007).

need to do more than merely talk about the theology of work in the technology era. If we would like to let Chinese Christians realize the theology of work at all, we also need to put it into an Asian context, especially a Chinese cultural context.

For example, here are some questions that have been asked during a theology of work conference in Asia:[94]

- What does work mean in your culture?

- What are the cultural factors that influence how people view work?

- Does Scripture affirm, enhance or critique these factors?

- What is the actual work ethic that is in place (meaning, not how does one work ethically but what makes people work or work hard or not work hard)?

- What cultural influences need to be factored into developing a theology and spirituality of the marketplace (all arenas of exchange) in your culture?

- What great biblical themes are important for developing an indigenous, local marketplace theology in your culture?

As this thesis-project is focused on the new need for Chinese Christians and Churches, we will focus on contextualization in Chinese culture only. Therefore, we will first need to know about the Chinese mind.

Understanding the Chinese Mind

If you ever work with Chinese colleagues, you need to spend some effort to learn about their cultural viewpoint on work and understanding of it. For westerners, Chinese

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[94] Stevens, "Toward A Contextualized Theology."

people are not very easy to understand. Often times, it is true that even a Chinese person would not find it easy to understand another Chinese. I was born in Taiwan and educated in Taiwan with a more Traditional Chinese cultural impact from Confucius. I know this to be the case because our parents would always tell us: "The wise man listens, but talks less." We did not learn to express our opinions loudly in public. It was just like playing a poker game. You do not want the other players to know what cards are in your hands. Basically, they instructed us every day to keep a low profile.

The Chinese person is hard to understand based on another interesting observation: 'When a Chinese person says 'yes,' does it mean 'yes' or something else?" The answer is "It depends." If you are asking a question to a person who is older than you, he may answer you by saying 'yes.' Normally, if this is the first time you ask him this particular question, a 'yes' means 'I hear you.' And if you want to confirm a true yes, you need to wait for at least one or two days, allowing him to think about it and then ask his opinion again later. If he answers 'yes' again, then it is a true yes. And if he does not directly say yes, but tells you some stories or other things, that means 'no.' When they try to reject your proposal or idea, they will not say 'no' directly.

This same situation would be different if you are senior member or a manager who is asking a question to a younger Chinese person or your Chinese team member. When they reply to your question with a 'yes,' it means yes. But it is a qualified 'yes'; this yes means 'I will follow your instruction.' It does not mean he agrees with you 100%. Again, Chinese people do not express their opinion directly in public most of the time, especially in answering questions from their senior members or their mangers. One

reason for this is that they do not want to express something that may create conflict with the idea of a superior. So, you may ask "How can I know what they really think?" It is not too difficult. You could ask them the same question again, but not in public. You could ask them in your office or during a coffee break time. But remember, it must be just you and him—not in public. This is not a hard rule for all Chinese people. For example, this kind of rule may not apply to those who are ABC (American Born Chinese). Those with a Chinese heritage, but born in the United States, don't consistently act in the same way that a person born and raised in China would act.

While I could continue to give more observations of the Chinese work mentality and way of thinking, it may be too broad. So, in this section, I would like to focus on five core elements of Chinese Thinking, which have been proposed by Geoff Baker and Helen Zhang.[95] I summarize these five core elements as follows:

1. *Language that shapes the mind*: The Chinese language, as it is expressed, is more conceptual. They use the "big picture" approach to see the whole first, then focus in on the details. They often make lateral connections based on the given information. In contrast, western thinking is more analytical. Westerners typically make decisions based on logic. They use the "one thing at one time" approach to work up to the whole, step by step. Westerners focus on details and they are highly organized. When they work on something, they make lists and plans. Chinese people listen to "HOW"

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[95] Geoff Baker and Helen Zhang, *Inside the Chinese Mind – A Guide on How the Chinese Think* (Singapore: Cengage Learning, 2012), 9-28.

something is being said and often prefer "mind pictures" to remember

things. They do not usually take notes. This is in contrast to Westerners who

listen to "WHAT" is being said. They use words to remember things. They

keep records, particularly figures and numbers. Another difference based on

language is that Chinese people have trouble prioritizing, are often late and

impulsive. They make decisions based on feelings and process ideas

simultaneously. Westerners, on the other hand, keep track of time. They

process ideas sequentially. They make logical deductions based on the given

information.[96]

2. *The Law of Yin* (陰) *and Yang* (陽) – *The Unity of Opposites*: Chinese people

are influenced by the book of I-Ching (易經，The Book of Changes) which

was written thousands of years ago. Tai-Yin (太陰) is the moon and Tai-Yang

(太陽) is the Sun. Yin (陰) is the symbol of feminine and negative forces or

objects while Yang (陽) is the symbol of masculine and positive ones. Even

though they are two extreme opposites, they coexist. Because of this,

Chinese people believe the world and everything in it should display harmony

and unity. They observe all phenomena related to nature, human society,

scientific findings, historical and political change and natural calamities to see

how they relate. These kind of concepts, when applied to a work

environment, could be good or bad. On the bright side, Chinese workers and

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[96] Baker and Zhang, *Inside the Chinese Mind*, 13.

entrepreneurs readily accept people from different cultures and backgrounds. This could allow them to bring the best people on board for a project or task or position. Chinese people would consider an environment which has both Yin and Yang forces together to be actually positive. However, on the negative side, the presence of both Yin and Yang forces also easily creates power struggles and can reduce efficiency within a company.

3. *Chinese Connectedness – "Born Equal" vs "Born Connected"*: Individualism is not a concept originally rooted in the Chinese mind. Westerners may believe that all people are born equal, however, the Chinese believe that are all born connected.[97] This difference is the concept of the "Big I" vs the "Small I." The Communist Party has promoted the priority of the nation and of the people to be higher than that of the family and of individuals. Subsequently, the highest moral standard is serving other people. This moral standard is clearly displayed by Christians, who are imitating Christ. One reason why many Chinese people come to the Lord Jesus Christ is that they are attracted by the sincerity of Christians who serve them in the church. One Chinese Student who accepted Jesus Christ shared his thoughts comparing the Communist's "serving other people moral standard" versus Christianity's "bearing your cross and denying yourself." He put it this way. "I admired the Communist Party's promotion about serving our people, however, I found the fact is they are promoting this and asking people to do this but they did not do it

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[97] Baker and Zhang, *Inside the Chinese*, 20.

themselves. I found Christ did all for us first and I found my Christian friends around did the same thing. It is a fake service (Communist Party) versus a true one (Christ)." While Christ's call to serve others is more genuine, nevertheless, the 'Big I' concept is very deeply rooted in the Chinese mind. In the business world, the first priority of an individual Chinese worker is not to become a high performer in the company, but to connect himself to the big family and be an integral part of larger web of the company.[98]

4. *Midstream Living*: Chinese people admire balance and harmony in everything and the midstream philosophy, called Zhong Yong (中庸), is the golden rule. Zhong Yong is both a doctrine of Confucianism and the title of one of the Four Books of Confucian philosophy.[99] Zhong (中) is neither right nor left but the middle way. Yong (庸) means unchanging. Chinese people try to maintain the balanced approach by keeping their mind in a state of constant equilibrium. They apply this concept to many aspects of their life. For example, a Chinese man will try to respect his elderly parents at home and at the same time try to make his wife and children happy.[100] They also apply this principle at work, where they emphasize being humble, modest and not too ambitious. This pursuit of balance at work, in the Chinese mind, is not

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[98] Baker and Zhang, *Inside the Chinese Mind*, 21.

[99] "Doctrine of the Mean," *Wikipedia*, last modified April 16, 2015, accessed April 20, 2015, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doctrine_of_the_Mean.

[100] Baker and Zhang, *Inside the Chinese Mind*, 23.

viewed as laziness or as a setback.[101]

5. *Face* (面子，MianZi) – *More Important Than Life Itself*. MianZi (Face) is a

person's reputation and social status. It is equivalent to that person's brand or

even more than that. It is very hard to quantify or qualify it. Since Chinese

people are more careful about their life within a bigger community,

interpersonal relationships are very important to them. Therefore a person's

reputation among family, friends and colleagues is crucial. MianZi (Face) also

plays key role in the business world. A multi-billion dollar contract could be

granted because the decision maker has worked to give MianZi (Face) to

someone. It is similar, though not identical, to giving credit to someone in the

western world. For example, while credit is something nice for a westerner to

have, MianZi (Face), for a Chinese person is sometimes more important than

life itself.[102]

Theology of Work for Chinese Christians

In the first chapter, I discussed the need for a Theology of Work within and

among Chinese Churches. In this chapter's previous two parts, I talked about

Technology's impact with regard to work and a proposal for a Theology of Work. Now, in

the third and final part of this chapter, I will discuss an additional three points for

Chinese Christians regarding the Theology of Work. Why do we need these three

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[101] Baker and Zhang, *Inside the Chinese Mind*, 23.

[102] Baker and Zhang, *Inside the Chinese Mind*, 25-26.

Theology of Work add-ons for Chinese Christians? These additions are proposed for

Chinese Christians, because of the above characteristics of the Chinese mind and

because Chinese Christians typically have very high educational backgrounds and

because many of them are working in technology companies. Chinese Christians in these

fields are the Chinese elites of the 21st Century. I am a minister to such kinds of Chinese

Christians in my Church in North America. When I look at their background, they have so

many similarities with myself. I know that we were trained to be excellent. You need to

work very hard to survive and thrive in light of significant competition. This competition

is due to the fact that China presently has the largest population of the whole world.

Succeeding in this limited resource, limited opportunity environment is not an easy

thing. You are trained to be focused in order to succeed. Your parents teach you nothing

else, except to be successful so that you can have financial security. You are encouraged

to sacrifice your own time and sometimes even your family in order to achieve this goal.

Therefore, I would like to propose three additional sections that apply to Chinese

Christians relating to the previously proposed Theology of Work:

1. Financial Security
2. Success
3. Sabbath

Financial Security: Work is NOT our Financial Security, God Is

Many Chinese people work so hard for one reason: Financial Security. They are

not merely working to make more money. They are making more money in order to save

more money. And they are not only saving more money for themselves, but saving more

money for their children and maybe even their grandchildren.

When mainland China opened its markets and allowed people to own their own private businesses in the 1980s, China was no longer a communist country. The ruling party of China presently insists that China is a Socialist country, however, it is materialism that is running the economy of China. The common goal of a young man in China is to make BIG money. Well, you may ask what the difference is between American young men and Chinese young men. Aren't they the same? They all pursue money. You are correct to observe that they all pursue money. But there are some differences. Chinese young men are told and trained, and maybe have heard from their parents experience, that suffering from Financial Insecurity is a very bad thing. They have been indoctrinated to believe that you must strive your best to obtain Financial Security. Thus, Financial Security has become their god. This 'lack-of-Financial-Security' concept enslaves Chinese young men. This is even true of young Chinese Christians as well. One place that this is clearly seen is in the tithing rate within the Chinese Church, which is pretty low.[103]

What does the Bible say about Financial Security? Hebrews 13:5 says "Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU."[104]

If the love of money is rooted in us because of our lack of financial security, we

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[103] For most Chinese Churches in North America, the donation records are confidential. However, an interesting fact from our church's 2012 report said this: "The top 30 donors contribute more than 80% of our churches yearly budget." We are a 250-member church. You can get a sense of the tithing rate from that.

[104] Hebrews 13:5.

must return to the promise of God. In Hebrews 13:5, God said that He will never desert

us and never forsake us, promising us greater security that finances can provide. Jesus

also says in Matthew 6:31-33: "Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?'

or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek after all these

things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the

kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."[105]

Therefore, we do not need to work to earn Financial Security. God is our security.

Success: Striving to Be Successful at Work While Needing to Be Ethical as Well

One of the biggest problems in China right now is pollution. Over-development

has brought serious pollution into the natural environment. Chinese people have not

considered the pollution problem to be too serious for the past three decades, except

for the most recent 5 years. Why have they ignored the pollution issue? The country

strived to be successful in economic development. For the country, economic success is

the first priority. For the individual, it is pretty much the same thing. Young men are

striving to be successful by doing whatever they can to achieve economic success.

Another example: the 2008 Chinese milk scandal[106] was a food safety incident in China,

involving milk and infant formula, and other food materials and

components, adulterated with melamine, which is a poisonous material that caused 6

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[105] Matthew 6:31–33.

[106] "Chinese Milk Scandal," *Wikipedia*, last modified April 16, 2015, accessed April 20, 2015, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2008_Chinese_milk_scandal.

babies to die from kidney damage. There were an estimated 54,000 babies hospitalized in this incident. And why did this happen? It happened because economic success is the first priority. It did not matter whether it was ethical or not. But this clearly conflicts with biblical values.

It is so true that unethical success is not Biblical success. Dr. David Gill said "Ethics isn't pretty, but the alternatives are really ugly."[107] It is better for a company to move from a damage-control model of ethics to a mission-control model of ethics. Gill argues that a successful, ethical, excellent business enterprise needs to have six inter-related foci:

1. **Motivation,**
2. **Trouble-Shooting,**
3. **Mission and Vision,**
4. **Culture and Value,**
5. **Practices and Principles,**
6. **Leadership and Governance.**[108]

I would like borrow Dr. Gill's ethical model for business enterprise, with its six inter-related foci, and apply it to a personal level. These foci are the same thing an individual working in the technology era of the modern world need to focus on. Specifically, below, I am applying this to Chinese Christians. We can ask individual Christian Chinese workers a series of questions. "What is your motivation? Are you working for yourself or for God? Do you have times of personal reflection? Do you have

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[107] David Gill, *It Is About Excellence: Building Ethically Healthy Organizations* (Eugene OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011,) 17.

[108] Gill, *It Is About Excellence*, 88-89.

a regular devotional time? Are you able to trouble-shoot issues related to your work? Do you have an accountability partner? What is your Mission and Vision at work? Do you bring biblical values to work, creating a healthy culture for your workplace? Do you, on a regular basis, practice what you plan to do? And do you examine your progress in these areas?

It may be hard to regularly ask yourself these types of questions in pursuit of ethical business practices. However, why not try to practice this self-reflection with your fellowship of Christian friends? Another way to do this self-reflection consistently is to find some Christians colleagues in your office and encourage each other to implement it, so that you all may become more ethical as you pursue success at work.

Sabbath: Rest Is Part of God's Mandate for Work

Most American restaurants close their stores for Thanksgiving Day. They close to observe the holiday which is a tradition that allows for families to reunite. You will not even find McDonald's open on that day. But guess which restaurants may still be open on Thanksgiving? Yes, Chinese Restaurants are open on Thanksgiving. Do they not need any rest? Of course they need some rest. But, work is a much higher priority than rest. So, most Chinese Restaurants owners would still work even on a national holiday. But this is not God's design for work.

The design of work from God includes rest. Sabbath is not merely a nice option for Christians. It is a mandate. It is a commandment. Genesis 2:1-3 says "Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. By the seventh day God

had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done."[109] We need to rest from work because it is God's design. God blessed his work with rest. God makes rest holy. Chinese people work hard. We consider that working hard with no rest is better than working hard with periods of regular rest. But this is not biblical. This is actually not good for our health or our family relationships. And most of all, it is not good for our relationship with God. Exodus 20:8-11 says:

> "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. "Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of the LORD your God; *in it* you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. "For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy."[110]

Because God commands it for our benefit, we work and rest as God works and rests.

Conclusion

In chapter two, I proposed three models for theology of technology, theology of work, and supplementary theology of work for Chinese Culture. These three models are all essential needed to train a contemporary Chinese Christian to be a Jesus follower at workplace by the Chinese Churches worldwide today.

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[109] Genesis 2:1-3.

[110] Exodus 20:8–11.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

In Chapter One, we addressed an urgent need for Chinese Christians to know

how to live out their faith in the technology era and pointed out the special situation

that exists for the Chinese Church. In chapter two, we proposed a model for the

theology of work along with considerations based on the impact of technology. We also

added additional considerations for Chinese Christians related to the theology of work.

In Chapter Three, we will provide a literature review regarding the theology for

technology, the theology of work with a focus on the impact of technology and a focus

on the impact of Chinese culture on work.

A Theology for Technology

Meaning of Technology? – Jacques Ellul

What does technology mean to us in the modern world? And what does

technology have to do with the Gospel? These are the questions that Jacques Ellul asks

in his article, *"Technology and Gospel,"* in the *International Review of Mission*. He says

this,

> The first aspect of the Gospel message I wish to consider here is the question of
> meaning. It seems to me plain that this problem was constantly raised by Jesus in
> the Gospels. What is the meaning of the law? Of moral customs (the sabbath and
> man)? Of the authorities ("Thou wouldest have no power at all...")? Of prayer

("Shut thyself in thy room...") and so on.[1]

Jacques Ellul continues,

> "The fact is that we have lived through a century in which meaning seemed to be contained in science (which was thought to have access to the truth in itself) and in technology (which was thought to be putting science to practical use for the benefit of human beings)[2].

A non-power perspective on technology is what Jacques Ellul tries to propose.

Ellul argues that when power is associated with technology, it has huge effects and whoever owns the technology will be criticized for not using technology to achieve power. Ellul says:

> This choice of non-power (which goes well beyond the non-violent position) is the determinative point for the critique of technology. Does this mean the complete abandonment of technology? That direction would obviously be Utopian and impossible, but on the other hand so is the common idea that we only need to change our way of using technology, using it properly instead of badly. It is not a matter of the use to which technology is put: means directed exclusively to quantitative growth, complete efficiency and power, cannot serve non-power![3]

This raises the need for further questions. For example, what is technology? What kind of power might technology have? Is there anything we need to worry about when we use technology?

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[1] Jacques Ellul, "Technology and the Gospel," *International Review of Mission* 66, Issue 262 (April 1977): 109-117.

[2] Ellul, "Technology and the Gospel," 109-117.

[3] Ellul, "Technology and the Gospel," 109-117.

Technology May Dominate Our Culture - Technopoly

Neil Postman gives warnings about technology. He argues technology has power itself and that we do not know technology too well nor how deeply influenced we are by technology. He says this:

> We are a culture consuming itself with information, and many of us do not even wonder how to control the process. We proceed under the assumption that information is our friend, believing that cultures may suffer grievously from a lack of information, which, of course, they do. It is only now beginning to be understood that cultures may also suffer grievously from information glut, information without meaning, information without control mechanisms.

Postman would like to highlight the seriousness of our lack of attention to the impact of technology on our culture. He puts it this way:

> One way of defining a Technopoly is to say that its information immune system is inoperable. Technopoly is a form of cultural AIDS, which I here use as an acronym for Anti-Information Deficiency Syndrome."[4]

So, what is the future of technology? How do we think about technology?

Postman does not have an answer to these questions and says this:

> I am proposing, as a beginning, a curriculum in which all subjects are presented as a stage in humanity's historical development …. This is a curriculum that goes "back to the basics," but not quite in the way the technocrats mean it. And it is most certainly in opposition to the spirit of Technopoly. I have no illusion that such an education program can bring a halt to the thrust of a technological thought-world.[5]

Yes, we agree with Postman's observations and conclusion that there is no answer from within technology itself. Technology quietly dominates our culture and life.

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[4] Neil Postman, *Technopoly - The Surrender of Culture to Technology* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1993), 63.

[5] Postman, *Technopoly*, 198-199.

We cannot remain ignorant about it. However, do we have a biblical perspective about technology? Fortunately, John Dyer has some good thoughts regarding technology from a biblical perspective.

What Is Technology and Its Relationship with Biblical Stories?

John Dyer argues that Technology is a kind of tool standing between the world and human beings. He also argues that, as we shape our tools, our tools shape us. He says, "Technology, then, is the means by which we transform the world as it is into the world that we desire. What we often fail to notice is that it is not only the world that gets transformed by technology. We, too, are transformed."[6]

John Dyer also proposes four-layers of technology by using Stephen J. Kline's model. These four-layers of technology are:

1. Technology as Hardware

2. Technology as Manufacturing

3. Technology as Methodology

4. Technology as Social Usage

Dyer, then, comes up with the definition for technology stating it as *the human activity of using tools to transform God's creation for [a] practical purpose."*[7] Dyer's definition gives a much clearer sense of technology's meaning combined with God's

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[6] John Dyer, *From the Garden to the City: The Redeeming and Corrupting Power of Technology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2011), 35.

[7] Dyer, *From the Garden*, 65.

creative purpose. Dyer continues to propose a 'Tetrad of Technology' uses as seen in the

following chart:

	Positive	Negative
Unintentional	1 Reflection	4 Restoration
Intentional	3 Redemption	2 Rebellion

Chart 1. Tetrad of Technology

Technology could be used for a bad purpose such as rebellion against God's

purpose. For example, it is a sin to use the internet in order to steal money. On the other

hand, the internet could be used to preach the Gospel to some area that does not have

a church. Technology use in the intentional categories is much easier to understand.

However, unintentional uses may need a bit more explanation. For example, the iPhone

designed by Steve Jobs, is modern technology and is a reflection of our creator's

communicative and relational nature. Steve Jobs never claimed to be a Christian.

However, his technology is an unintentional reflection of creation (Category 1). Dyer

later explains the category of Restoration (Category 4):

> The category of restoration is not meant to be an excuse in regard to the
> problems of technology. On the contrary, carefully considering the tradeoffs and
> problems of technology should urge us to create and use tools that fit within
> God's command to both "cultivate" and "keep" the garden. And if we are not in
> the position of creating such tools, we need to spend time thinking about the
> value systems that emerge from using a tool; we must discern when those tools
> are in conflict with the value system of the kingdom of God. Just as the promise
> of resurrection does not imply that we are free to neglect our souls and bodies,
> the promise to restore our tools does not give us license to create or use tools
> that abuse God's creation and distort the kind of life he has commanded us to

live.[8]

Toward a Theology of Technology

There are some characteristics of technology to which we need to pay special attention. Dr. David Gill argues for the following: technology is ambivalent; Technology has an almost deterministic power; Technology is universalistic; and Technology serves as the sacred.[9] These are the characteristics of technology that we need to avoid so that technology doesn't become a power which dominates us and eventually enslaves us. Gill also argues for a model of the theology of technology in the following four points:[10]

1. God's creativity as the source of human theological imagination.

   We human beings are made in the image and likeness of this creating God. So the first and basic source of our own creativity is this fact of our nature. But human creativity and technology are not just an exhibition of our nature—they are also a response to the command and invitation of God. It is the freedom of obeying God's Word that underlies technological activity in a biblical worldview.

2. Human creativity is bounded.

   Our technological and creative work is bounded in four ways. First, it is launched by the Word of God....Second, it is bounded temporally by the Sabbath: God rests on the seventh day and so do those made in God's image....Third, it is bounded spatially in that there is a tree at the center of the garden that is not to be harvested for food....Finally, human creative work was bounded ethically in that the prohibited tree was the "ethics tree"—the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

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[8] Dyer, *From the Garden*, 142-143.

[9] David Gill, "Technology,", in *The Marketplace Ministry Handbook: A Manual for Work, Money and Business*, R. Paul Stevens and Robert Bank (Vancouver, BC: Regent College, 2005), 263-264.

[10] Gill, "Technology," 268.

3. Human technology now needs redemption.

   Technology is itself now fallen, sometimes perverse and violent, open to becoming idolatrous and autonomous. Because of the Fall, the creativity motifs in a theology of technology must now be caught up within a theology of present and final redemption.

4. Human technology must keep the end in view.

   Thus, our technology needs a new, rigorous assessment of the true ends of human life. In the light of these ends, specific technologies can be assessed and evaluated. Our means must not be self-justifying. They must be justified by God's end, and then they must exhibit the character (not the contradiction) of that end.

What Is the Response of Church Leaders And of the Christian Community to Technology?

Church leaders may not be experts in technology, however, they could encourage

Christians to form a small group or social community to discuss and address this modern

issue.

Dr. Al Erisman said the following during an interview:

Question: How can church leaders learn about new possibilities and challenges of technology? Erisman answered:

   Though I read and consult widely in these matters, I have not seen a systematic look at these things in the context of the gospel—only pieces of the whole. A lot in the secular press has been written related to business and society. Some of this could be carefully adapted to the needs of the church. Reading discriminately (for example, Don Tapscott's Growing Up Digital or Robert Reich's The Future of Success) is a good start. Creating Christian study groups around this material is even better.

Technology Is Culture: We Could Be a Culture Changer in the Technology Era

Andy Crouch argues "Culture is not optional. We cannot withdraw from the

culture. Culture is inescapable. And that's a good thing."[11]

Stephen Whiting talked about the relationship of Christ with Technology.[12] He

summarized it this way:

> To reapply Niebuhr's framework to the arena of Christ and technology could
> create the following five relational categories: (1) Christ against culture - Christ
> and technology in opposition. The stereotypical example of this would be the
> Amish. However, their response to technology is much more nuanced. Still the
> image is one of rejecting the creation and use of most forms of technology. (2)
> Christ of culture - Christ and technology in fundamental agreement. This is the
> way the vast majority of Americans think about faith and technology; basically
> accepting technology uncritically. (3) Christ above culture – Christ above
> technology by honoring that which is good while adding Christian faith, hope,
> and love to that inherent goodness. An example of this might include TV being
> ok if it dispenses the Gospel or educational content. (4) Christ and culture in
> paradox - Christ and technology in paradox. In this view both Christ and
> technology claim our loyalty and the tension between them cannot always be
> reconciled. (5) Christ transforming culture - Christ transforming technology."

The fifth point from Whiting is what we proposed for Christians at work: to

prepare ourselves to be the culture changers in the technological working environment.

The Technology Environment shifted

At the end of the Literature Review for Technology, we would like to talk a little

about the shift in the technological environment. Technology is changing every day.

Technology in year 2010 was different from Technology in year 2000. This is even true

for today: Technology in 2014 is different from Technology in 2010. One of the major

shifts today is that Mobile Technology has changed the traditional office setting. There

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[11] Andy Crouch, *Culture Makin,* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2007), 34-36.

[12] Stephen Whiting, "Towards a Biblical View of Technology," (paper presented to the Christian Business
Faculty Association 2011 Annual Conference Mount Vernon Nazarene University, Mount Vernon, OH,
2011).

no longer needs to be a fixed location for an office.

Susan Evans said:

> The definition of office is being rewritten in response to the digital age. While web-based collaboration has had an impact on office workers of all kinds, it has distinctly shaped the work style and expectations of digital natives - who have never known work without the flexibility of always-on connectivity. Digital natives are not bound by location. Armed with a laptop and a cell phone, they are emerging as a breed of nomadic workers who can get the job done from anywhere: their homes, the airport, local coffee shops, and yes, even in an office.[13]

And,

> "Where the digital native can work and where the digital native wants to work may still be quite different as the market adjusts to meet the needs of these employees. Drab monochrome offices will probably never disappear, and cube farms will persist. However, as the market catches up to nomadic workers, it is doing so by adjusting to their diverse and distinct needs."[14]

And,

> Virtuality is a key factor shaping today's workplace: It has begun to segregate workers from traditional offices to some extent and to allow the growth of an entirely new range of office models. These will be discussed in greater detail when we look at the self-employment track for digital nomads, but the virtual option for work also pertains to those who work for large companies.[15]

Since the work environment has shifted from the traditional office to a virtual office, the communication style between workers will change. Many of the relationships and interactions between workers will be changed. The work ethics in virtual office settings will also need to be updated. Being salt and light remains the same mission for

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[13] Michelle Manafy and Heidi Gautschi, *Dancing with Digital Natives: Staying in Step With the Generation That's Transforming the Way Business Is Done* (Medford, NJ: Information Today, 2011), 19.

[14] Manafy and Gautschi, *Dancing with Digital Natives*, 21.

[15] Manafy and Gautschi, *Dancing with Digital Natives*, 25.

all Christians at work. However, the approaches used to achieve the Great Commission will need to be adjusted in the shifting technology era.

Now, we will move from Theology for Technology to Theology of Work. We will start from the meaning of Work.

The Meaning of Work from Different Theologians

Protestant Theologians View on the Meaning of Work

Luther's theology is well known as 'justification by faith alone' and 'the priesthood of all believers.' His view about the meaning of work focuses on the believer's vocation. Through all the different vocations, Christians are blessing their neighbors.[16] That is the fulfillment of God's work. He emphasized that there is no one vocation more spiritual than any other. Considering the relationship between faith and work, Luther argued that work done by the clergy and the laity is equal, as long as the work is from faith and within the guidance of Holy Spirit.[17]

Calvin's view on work is similar to that of Luther. Hart summarized five points for Calvin's view on work: 1. God's providence; 2. Remaining in one's calling; 3. Service to Others; 4. Spiritual Significance of Ordinary Work; 5. The equal value of all kinds of work.[18] In both Luther and Calvin's views on work, they tried to mitigate the gap

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[16] Gustaf Wingren, *Luther on Vocation*, (trans. Carl C Rasmussen (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2004).

[17] Gordon Isaac, "Lecture Notes," (lecture, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, June 2009).

[18] Ian Hart, "The Teaching of Luther and Calvin about Ordinary Work: 2. John Calvin(1509-1564)," *Evangelical Quarterly* (1995): 124-128.

between "secular" and "holy" work. This raises an interesting question. How come this kind of "secular-holy" concept still exists in the evangelical church today after hundreds of years? Somehow this reflects a long time lack of teaching regarding the meaning of ordinary work.

Volf gave some critiques about Luther's vocational understanding of work. Here are Volf's six points:[19]

1. Luther's understanding of work as vocation is indifferent toward alienation in work. Hence, it seems that virtually every type of work can be called vocation, no matter how dehumanizing it might be.
2. There is a dangerous ambiguity in Luther's notion of vocation. Luther's bold identification of vocation with the call led again and again to the integration of the call into vocation and vocation into occupation.
3. The understanding of work as vocation is easily misused ideologically.
4. The notion of vocation is not applicable to the increasing mobile industrial and information society. Most people in these societies do not keep a single job or employment for a lifetime.
5. In industrial and information societies people increasingly take on more than one job at the same time.
6. As the nature of human work changed in the course of industrialization, vocation was reduced to gainful employment. The reduction of vocation to employment, coupled with the belief that vocation is the primary service ordinary people render to God, contributed to the modern fateful elevation of work to the status of religion.

We will discuss more about Volf's theology of work in the following section.

Contemporary Theologians View on the Meaning of Work

Paul Stevens – Kingdom perspective and Workplace Spirituality

Although the development of the Theology of Work is a fairly new concept after World War II, there are many different research directions in this area. We could do a

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[19] Miroslav Volf, *Work in the Spirit, Toward A Theology of Work* (New York, NY: Oxford University, 2001), 107-109.

very quick review of them. Paul Stevens summarized the Theology of Work from

different Doctrinal approaches:[20]

1. Trinitarian Theologies: Work for human, God-imaging creatures is determined by the work of the Triune God.
2. Creation Theologies: Work was given in God's original design at the creation so that human beings could function as coworkers and co-creators with God.
3. Image of God Theologies: God-imaging creatures are given power to make decisions and to make a difference.
4. Curse Theologies: Work comes after the fall of human beings into sin and therefore is a negative thing and cursed.
5. New Creation Theologies: Work is an expression of life under the New Covenant and therefore is both substantially redeemed and redeeming. We are coworkers with God in the new creation, collaborating with God in the creation of the world and embellishment of creation and human life. Some authors claim that toil and suffering in the context of our work actually contributes to our sanctification.
6. Vocation Theologies: Work in our present situation is a calling of God.
7. Spirit Theologies: Work is an expression of the Spirit's work and giftedness, not only in church ministry but also in the world.
8. Kingdom Theologies: Work is part of expressing God's life-giving and shalom-bringing rule over all of life, not only in the life to come but also in the present world.
9. Heaven and End Times Theologies: The meaning of work is determined by the end. Some of our work in this life will last beyond the grave. The ultimate experience of work will be in the new heaven and new earth.

Paul Stevens argues for a kingdom perspective on the theology of work with an emphasis on Faith, Hope and Love. Paul Stevens' kingdom perspective on the theology of work is a forward-looking theology, meaning not looking backward to the utopian sanctuary of the garden in Genesis as the ultimate destination. The kingdom perspective has the final vision of the Garden-City in the new heaven and new earth in a totally transformed creation as the ultimate destination. This is what Paul Stevens said about the forward looking kingdom perspective:

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[20] R. Paul Stevens, *Work Matters – Lessons from Scriptures* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012), 2-3.

God's first thought was the marriage supper of the Lamb, the final rendezvous of God, creation, and humankind. And to get there he made a world, made God-imaging creatures, and even sent his Son to redeem everything. But the end of it all — and what a glorious metaphor this is for the kingdom of God — is a party. While following the order of the books of the bible in our study, we must bear in mind that the ultimate goal makes everything different, including our everyday work.[21]

Paul Stevens also argues we shall work in faith, in love and in hope. He put it this way:

> "**First, we work in faith** — that is, in fellowship with God, like Abel and many of the leading figures whose work-lives we have examined. We work for God. We work knowing that far from being a hindrance to spiritual growth, work provides a context for soul growth.
> **Second, we work in love**, fellowship, and interdependence with coworkers, building community in every way we can. Our work is a practical way of loving our neighbors, near and far, as well as providing for our family and loved ones close to home.
> **Third, we work in hope**, engaging the powers that frustrate God's life-giving realm on earth, and being persuaded that some of our work will last and contribute to the new heaven and new earth.[22]

More about the Definition of Work

To have a better understanding about the theology of work, it is very important to know the definition of work. Different modern theologians provide us with their definitions. We will start with a definition from David Miller.

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[21] Stevens, *Work Matters*, 5-6.

[22] Stevens, *Work Matters*, 170-171.

David Miller

David Miller argues that work is paid employment. This is David Miller's definition of

work:

> Work is somehow distinct from leisure, play, and hobbies, though to an observer
> they often may be hard to distinguish. Similarly, the boundary between the
> spaces in which we work and in which we rest – the workplace and the home – is
> increasingly blurred....I shall define work as paid employment.[23]

David Jensen

David Jensen gives a definition of work that is more related to the Biblical

perspective. Jensen argues that work includes blessings and curses and said this:

> Most attitudes toward work display a tension between work as a command and
> work as a reflection of the fall. Few attitudes toward work understand it only as
> curse; few as only blessing. The richness of our traditions offers ample resources
> for recovering a sense of good work. As I argue here, theological conceptions of
> work that are capable of absorbing both the blessing and curse of labor are most
> adequate to describing work's ambiguity in a fragmented world.[24]

Jensen also argues that God is a worker who is trying to reestablish His covenant

with His people. Jensen continues:

> Biblical narratives overflow with work. Between the opening lines of Genesis,
> which portray God as worker, and the closing chapter of Revelation, with its
> vision of a new creation, God labors. One of the distinguishing characteristics of
> biblical faith is that God does not sit enthroned in heaven removed from work,
> willing things into existence by divine fiat. Unlike the gods of Greco-Roman
> mythologies, who absolve themselves of work—dining on nectar and ambrosia in
> a heaven of rest and contemplation—the God of the Bible works. This God molds
> humans in God's image, establishes a covenant with a displaced people, laments

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[23] David W. Miller, "The Sunday-Monday Gap: Called to Pew or Profit?" in *Living Out Our Callings in the Workplace* (St. Paul, MN: Luther Seminary, 2005), 1.

[24] David Jensen, *Responsive Labor – A Theology of Work*, (Louisville, KY: WJKP, 2006), 20.

when the covenant is broken, strives to reestablish His covenant with that people, and becomes incarnate to labor, suffer, die, and be raised for the whole world.[25]

Jensen pointed out that God's work is all good, but we human beings failed. The failure of God's people in God's original design for work brought consequences to the world. Labor became toil and drudgery. But, will that be it? Where is the hope for work? We need to look at both God's design for work in the garden and also for work in the new creation as well.

J.J. Davis and Ben Witherington

As we have tried to understand the importance of work from creation in Genesis, we now consider the importance of work in the new creation.

J. J. Davis gave a pretty good definition of work in the new heaven. He described a bit more detail about work in the New Creation and said,

> That there will be new work for the redeemed people of God to do in the New Creation, and that worship will be a central but not the exclusive activity in the world to come.
> The regular rhythm of work alternating with rest, celebration, and worship that characterized the divine creation week in the first creation would also apply in some way in the world to come. The redeemed people of God would not be involved in ceaseless work, but the worship of the Triune God would forever be the highest and most pleasurable of all experiences, as they delight in their glorious redeeming God, and right relationships with other humans and the entire created cosmos. Such a vision of the New Creation, it is here suggested, energizes and valorizes all forms of human work in the present that are done for the glory of God, until that time when the kingdoms of this world have become '...the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ.' [26]

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[25] Jensen, *Responsive Labor*, 20.

[26] J. J. Davis, "Will There Be New Work in the New Creation?" *Evangelical Review of Theology* 31 (2007): 256–273.

Perhaps Ben Witherington's definition is the one closest to our technological

working environment. Witherington's definition of work has a very good balance

between God and human being; between its purposes for physical needs and spiritual

needs; between the current world and the future world in the new creation. He said

this:

> "Thus, we could offer the following as a Christian definition of work: any
> necessary and meaningful task that God calls and gifts a person to do and which
> can be undertaken to the glory of God and for the edification and aid of human
> beings, being inspired by the Spirit and foreshadowing the realities of the new
> creation."[27]

Witherington further explained,

> Work was part of the original creation design, and it appears to be in the works
> for the new creation as well. Work should be neither demonized nor divinized. If
> we were to contrast for a moment, however, the creation and the eschatological
> visions of work in the Bible, we could say that in the creation accounts work is
> what human beings were fitted and commanded to do, whereas in the
> eschatological accounts it is what the Spirit inspires and gifts them to do, and in
> which they find joy.

With Ben Witherington's Christian definition of work in mind, we will continue to

look at more regarding work and the new creation.

Moltmann, Volf and Cosden

We will have a brief survey of Moltmann, Volf and Cosden's view on work.

First, Moltmann believes that the correct meaning of work is joy, freedom,

and lively happiness. Those are the fundamental parts of work; and he also considers

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27 Ben Witherington, *Work –A Kingdom Perspective on Labor* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011), xii.

that 'work begins with play' and that 'work [is] a right.' He thinks play is a freedom and

an activity corresponding to God. He also argues that human rights are the reflection of

God's image directly.[28]

Volf has his own definition of work.

Work is honest, purposeful, and a methodologically specified social activity whose primary goal is the creation of products or states of affairs that can satisfy the needs of working individuals or their co-creatures, or (if primarily an end in itself) an activity that is necessary in order for acting individuals to satisfy their needs apart from the need for the activity itself.[29]

Volf, based on deep reflection, argues that the traditional approach to theology

of work is based on the doctrine of sanctification, which is good because it discussed

what influence the new life in Christ should have on a Christian's daily work.[30] This kind

of approach is indispensable but needs to be modified.[31] He then proposed a theology

of work with the concept of new creation. He admitted he is developing his

eschatological theology of work from Moltmann's Theology of Hope.[32] The Christian

faith has an eschatological meaning. The Christian life is part of the life in the new

creation. Our whole life is guided by the Spirit of God. Christians must be changed by the

Holy Spirit into a new creation. Therefore, the Christian's theology of work should build

on the solid soteriology and eschatology which is anticipatory of God's new creation and

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[28] Darrell Cosden, *A Theology of Work, Work and the New Creation* (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2004), 47, 51-53.

[29] Volf, *Work in the Spirit*, 10-11.

[30] Volf, *Work in the Spirit*, 71.

[31] Volf, *Work in the Spirit*, 74.

[32] Volf, *Work in the Spirit*, 79.

hope for the future consummation.[33]

Cosden's study of theology of work basically is a follow-up of Volf's work.

Darrell Cosden's recent research on the Theology of Work[34] addressed many aspects related to the concerns about the value of earthly work. His research[35] is built upon the study of Volf's "Work in the Spirit."[36] Traditionally, evangelical scholars start the theology of work from Genesis chapters one to three, the passage about God's creation.[37] However, both Volf and Cosden studied the value of work from the perspectives of both creation and eschatology. Cosden argues that redemption is not limited to just our souls or our spirits, it should also include our bodies, our world, creation and all that is redeemable within it. Cosden said:

> As we will see, the Bible is quite clear on God's future promises for the physical creation - more so than some of us might have realized. It does not, however, state as literally as some might wish that what humans do in this life, specifically for our purposes "our work," will be included in this salvation. This lack of "proof-texts," however, does not mean that the Bible fails to teach such a view, or teach it clearly.[38]

What Is My View of Theology of Work Based on Eschatology?

I appreciate the foundation that Moltmann, Volf and Cosden have laid for future

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[33] Volf, *Work in the Spirit*, 79.

[34] Darrell Cosden, *The Heavenly Good of Earthly Work* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2006).

[35] Cosden, *Theology of Work*.

[36] Volf, *Work in the Spirit*.

[37] Gideon Goosen, *The Theology of Work* (n.p.: Clergy Book Service, 1977).

[38] Cosden, 52-53.

study in the field of theology of work. Some scholars like David Jensen's "Responsive Labor" are also built upon their works. The theology of work cannot ignore the eschatological perspective. It is a very true conclusion that all Christians in the contemporary world cannot merely focus on their daily work without an assurance as to what degree their work will last into eternity. Many of the questions that Cosden asked in his books inspired numerous thoughts regarding the relationship between genuine faith and real work.[39]

However, I have difficulty completely accepting Volf and Cosden's view about the work in the new earth, especially, the works considered to be redeemed or saved in the new heaven and new earth. Both of them tried to derive their proposal from a biblical view. I agree with their proof or evidence but cannot agree with their conclusion as a general rule. Work in the existing world indeed has a meaning for eternity. However, I believe more that the meaning of our existing work relies heavily on bringing the People of God to return to the relationship with God as a fundamental covenant relationship. All of our works' final value is derived from the contribution it makes to "I am your God and you are my children" in the new heaven and new earth. To be honest, the Bible has a lack of details on the new heaven and new earth. We know there is hope in the eschatology. However, we cannot have a totally clear picture until the day Jesus returns. Yes, Jesus is our model, the firstborn son of God. But, our work is different from his in many senses. We should imitate his work, however, we imitate it poorly because we are sinners in this world. Our effort could be limited. That is why we need God's grace to

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[39] Cosden, *Heavenly Good*, 3-9.

complete his good works.

Obviously, Volf and Cosden focus more on the meaning of work from an eschatological view than the protological (existing creation) view. Would it be possible that both Volf and Cosden overly emphasized the eschatological view? In this area, I agree more with Langer's critiques. I think it would be a more balanced view to think about the meaning of works from both directions, eschatologically and protologically. I support that existing work has its present value as well as its future value. This view conforms to the two books of Thessalonians. One cannot expect Jesus' return and just wait for it, placing no value in current work. On the other hand, one needs to think about and cooperate with God in his future kingdom.

Conclusion on the Theology of Work

I value this study of the theology of work very much. It has inspired me in many situations within the pastoral counseling field with regard to Christians at work. I worked in the Information Technology field for more than seventeen years before I became a full-time minster. I know the suffering caused by a lack of teaching and a lack of understanding the theology of work. Very little help has been provided to Christians at work from the pastoral ministers in this field of study. That is why there is a disconnection between Monday and Sunday. Therefore, bringing the meaning of work to the Christians who work is a very meaningful task for all the pastoral ministers. I believe that it has significant value in the new heaven and new earth.

Asian Contextualization and Working Culture

I studied four basic books of Confucian throughout my middle school and high school years. Those four basic books are: Great Learning (大學), Doctrine of the Mean (中庸), Analects (論語), and Mencius (孟子). Those four books have not only impacted Chinese culture for the past two thousand and five hundred years, its influence has also reached to Japan, Korea and almost all countries in Southeast Asia. It is not possible to address all the details of the philosophical and political thinking from these four books in this thesis-project. However, in this literature review section, we will highlight the most important thinking from each of them, especially those related to Asian working culture.

Profit vs. Benevolence and Righteousness

Let's start with a passage from Mencius (Mengzi 孟子). Mencius was not only a scholar who taught some students. In the time around 372 BC- 289 BC, there were 7 major kingdoms in China. Mencius spent quite a lot of time lobbying kings and their kingdoms to adopt the major philosophy of 'Benevolence and Righteousness' which he and Confucius taught. Here is one of the most famous dialogues between Mencius and King Hui of Liang.

> Mencius (Mengzi 孟子) 1. A1
> Mengzi had an audience with King Hui of Liang. The King said, "Sir, you have come, not regarding one thousand li (Miles) as too far. Surely you will have something to profit my state?"
> Mengzi said in response, "Why must Your Majesty say, 'profit'? Let there be benevolence and righteousness and that is all. Your Majesty says, 'How can my state be profited?' The Counsellors say, 'How can my family be profited?' The scholars and commoners say, 'How can I be profited?' Those above and those

below mutually compete for profit and the state is endangered.

In a case where the ruler of a state that can field ten thousand chariots is murdered, it must be by a family that can field a thousand chariots. In a case where the ruler of a state that can field a thousand chariots is murdered, it must be by a family that can field a hundred chariots. One thousand out of ten thousand, or one hundred out of a thousand, cannot be considered to not be a lot. But if righteousness is put behind and profit is put ahead, one will not be satisfied without grasping from others.

There have never been those who were benevolent who abandoned their parents. There have never been those who were righteous who put their ruler last. Let Your Majesty say 'Benevolence and righteousness,' and that is all. Why must you say 'profit'?[40]

Profit and Money, strength and power were the most practical things that the ancient Chinese focused on. And the same is true even now. So, there has been a struggle and battle lasting for more than two thousands year between profit and the benevolence and righteousness which Confucius and Mencius were advocating. We may consider that these men were actually pretty successful because most Asian people have accepted and adopted their philosophy. However, it is true that for most of these people, while they understood Benevolence and Righteousness to be the correct and right way, the main stream of thought that has dominated Asian culture has always been 'Profit.' Perhaps, this aspect of Asian culture will be presented more correctly when we put it this way: On the surface, people talked about Benevolence and Righteousness as if they identified themselves to be holding a much higher moral standard. People did not like to talk about 'Profit.' Just below the surface, however, even though they did not like to identify themselves as profit seekers, the practice of profit seeking and taking has always been the main stream, which has driven the typical Asian person in their daily life

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[40] Philip J. Ivanhoe and Bryan W. Van Norden, *Reading in Classical Chinese Philosophy, 2nd Edition,* (Cambrdige, MA: Hackett Publishing, 2001), 117-118.

and work.

Education Is Everything?

Analects (論語) is the book which includes the connections of Confucius' sayings.

One of the most quoted concepts from Confucius is about the importance of education.

This passage is the very beginning of Analects, section one of book one:

> 1.1 The Master said, "To learn, and then have occasion to practice what you
> have learned—is this not satisfying? To have friends arrive from afar— is this
> not a joy? To be patient even when others do not understand—is this not the
> mark of the gentleman?"[41]

The second passage is from Analects' book seven, sections one and two:

> 7.1 The Master said, "I transmit rather than innovate, I trust in and love the
> ancient way. I might thus humbly compare myself to Old Peng."
> 7.2 The Master said, "Remaining silent and yet comprehending, learning and
> yet never becoming tired, encouraging others and never growing weary, these
> are tasks that present me with no difficulty."[42]

The first of these two second passages requires more background about Old

Peng. Old Peng is a legendary, long-lived figure in China. He supposedly lived over 800

years in the Yin dynasty,[43] which is before the dynasty of Zhou in which Confucius lived.

Asians pay a lot of respect to the elderly. Seniority plays an important role in the work

culture. That is why even Confucius humbled himself to admit he trusts in and loves the

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[41] Ivanhoe and Van Norden, *Classical Chinese Philosophy*, 3.

[42] Ivanhoe and Van Norden, *Classical Chinese Philosophy*, 3.

[43] "Introduction of Peng Zu," *Wikipedia*, last modified April 15, 2015, accessed April 20, 2015,
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peng_Zu.

ancient way. In the first part of passage of 7.1, Confucius talked about how he transmits rather than innovates. This means he devoted himself to teaching the ancient way, which is the complete old wisdom of the Ancient Chinese. The concept of education is a long-term and continuous business for Chinese from one generation to another. In the first two parts of the passage of 7.2, Confucius talked about how his learning attitude. The third part is about his teaching attitude. Even today, many Chinese students still keep the same spirit of *"Remaining silent and yet comprehending, learning and yet never becoming tired."* This could explain why the Chinese international students don't ask too many questions in the classroom when they study at a U.S. college. They probably spend more time studying after school and trying to figure out the things they do not understand by themselves. They inherited the culture of *'remaining silent and yet comprehending.'*

In Book one Section one, Confucius emphasized the importance of learning and education. He encouraged people to devote themselves to education and never give up even if others cannot accept it and cannot understand it. We may see that this has impacted Asian culture significantly. Asians seek to receive higher education. Asians respect the teacher. Asians values patience as a good virtue, and so on.

Self-Improvement

Another important book is the writing called Great Learning (大學). We will see the first four sections from the Book of Great Learning (大學). Here is the text:

1. The way of great learning consists in manifesting one's bright virtue, consists

in loving the people, consists in stopping in perfect goodness.

2. When you know where to stop, you have stability. When you have stability, you can be tranquil. When you are tranquil, you can be at ease. When you are at ease, you can deliberate. When you can deliberate you can attain your aims.

3. Things have their roots and branches, affairs have their end and beginning. When you know what comes first and what comes last, then you are near the Way.

4. The ancients who wanted to manifest their bright virtue to all in the world first governed well their own states. Wanting to govern well their states, they first harmonized their own clans. Wanting to harmonize their own clan, they first cultivated themselves. Wanting to cultivate themselves, they first corrected their minds. Wanting to correct their minds, they first made their wills sincere. Wanting to make their wills sincere, they first extended their knowledge. Extension of knowledge consists of the investigation of things.[44]

The above text from the Book of Great Learning (大學) pointed out the meaning

of learning, the methodology of learning and mission statement of learning. In section 3,

the text said, *"Things have their roots and branches, affairs have their end and*

beginning. When you know what comes first and what comes last, then you are near the

Way." Being near the way is the goal of learning. It is hard to achieve. But, the

philosophy behind it is to encourage everyone to strive to be the best.

We may also find the spirit of self-improvement in the text. One shall never stop

cultivating himself, and never stop pursuing harmony with others. Professor Wang

Gungwu from the East Asian Institute at the National University of Singapore also

pointed out the significant value of self-improvement in Asian culture. Self-improvement

is the foundation of the ethical system in Asia. Wang Gungwu said,

> The starting point, whether man (and the Confucian focus was on man) was born good or bad, was his capacity to learn and prepare himself to serve his family and community. This was mastered in stages, beginning with the discipline needed

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[44] A. Charles Muller, "Book of Great Learning," *ACMuller.NET*, last modified July 03, 2013, accessed March 25, 2015, http://www.acmuller.net/con-dao/greatlearning.html.

for self-improvement, most tangibly seen in behavior towards parents and elders and in the willingness to study the ethical values essential for social harmony and practical living. It was recognized that relatively few people could achieve enough self-improvement to provide the leadership that the larger polity would need. It was, therefore, all the more important that those who did were given the heavy responsibility to develop and protect the edifices of the civilized human condition.[45]

Pursuing Harmony

Lastly, we will check with the book of Zhong Yong (中庸) or the book of Doctrine

of the Mean. We would like to quote one paragraph of the text along with another

paragraph of commentary from Confucius.

Text (Partial)
"When joy, anger, sorrow and pleasure have not yet arisen, it is called the Mean (中 centeredness, equilibrium). When they arise to their appropriate levels, it is called "harmony" 和. The Mean is the great root of all-under-heaven. "Harmony" is the penetration of the Way through all-under-heaven. When the Mean and Harmony are actualized, Heaven and Earth are in their proper positions, and the myriad things are nourished."[46]
Commentary
Confucius said: "The Superior Man actualizes the mean; the inferior man goes against it. The Superior Man actualizes the mean because he is always with it; the inferior man's non-actualization is due to his heedlessness."[47]

Confucius, the Master, tried to emphasize the importance of reaching harmony.

This emphasis is interesting for the concept of the Mean (中) and harmony. The Mean

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[45] Frank-Jirgen Richter and Pamela C.M. Mar, *Asia's New Crisis; Renewal Through Total Ethical Management* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Publishing, 2004), 52.

[46] A. Charles Muller, "Doctrine of Mean," ACMuller.NET, last modified July 03, 2013, accessed March 25, 2015, http://www.acmuller.net/con-dao/docofmean.html.

[47] A. Charles Muller, "Doctrine of Mean," ACMuller.NET, last modified July 03, 2013, accessed Marc 25, 2015, http://www.acmuller.net/con-dao/docofmean.html.

(中) is actualized *"when joy, anger, sorrow and pleasure have not yet arisen"*. Confucius asked his students to pursue the Superior Man, who could actualize the Mean (中). On the other hand, for those who could not actualize the Mean, Confucius called them Inferior Men. You may very often see this kind of cultural influence among Asians. Most Asians can tolerate an environment or situation being not so good. Pursuing harmony is somehow implicit in the DNA of most Asians.

From Geoff Baker and Helen Zheng

Context over Content

To understand Chinese people and Asians in general, often you cannot just focus on content but your focus should be more on the context. Here is a quote from Ted Sun, a business development consultant for Westerners who are trying to understand Chinese people and culture. Ted Sun said,

> For many business leaders, seeing and understanding the context presents significant challenges. "Content" is abundant within the norms of the Western world. In a recent workshop with leaders, it appeared that one of the common problems they faced was the lack of effective communication within the organization. The content in this situation is the surface issue of communication. Managers saw the economy as a reason why people weren't communicating. Yet they sent people to communication workshops who then came back with no sustainable change in behavior. It was often easy to blame specific individuals for not communicating.
>   As I helped these leaders see the context of the situation, they were astonished at the impossible request they were focusing on in content. They realized that communication between people is only a surface-level perspective. Below the noticeable behaviors, the context or the environment of a rigid hierarchical structure and top-down decision process drove people into fear of the unknown. While they preached an open-door policy, the existing context of the workplace promoted distrust and political maneuvers to get ahead. The

current economic situation didn't make it any easier with the media constantly reporting layoffs around the nation. As these leaders looked at the context of their organization, they saw that it made a clear statement: "You will conform to my rules." Within this context, there was no desire for employees to communicate since the structure allowed no room for innovative thought outside the directions from top management. Seeing the context empowered leaders to realize an abundance of new ideas to address many issues, including the lack of communication.

Ted Sun argues that, in order to communicate with Chinese people, it is more important to go beyond the content level and reach the context level. The cultural impact and influence is the context level you should know when you try to understand a Chinese person's thinking. This holds true anytime you communicate with a Chinese person, no matter if it is for business or for ministry.

Conclusion

A comment from Philip J. Ivanhoe, Associate Professor of Philosophy and Asian Language and Culture at the University of Michigan, will serve as a conclusion:

> Chinese philosophers, particularly those in the Confucian tradition, have paid a great deal of attention to the issue of moral self cultivation. Most have tied their views regarding self cultivation to a corresponding theory of human nature and such theories have greatly influenced what these thinkers see as the necessary or most effective methods for moral self-improvement. However, all believe that moral self cultivation is not only possible but a critical part of the good life, and it is the primary focus of much of their ethical reflection.[48]

Yes, self-cultivation is rooted in the majority of Chinese minds. And it is true that self-cultivation is the primary focus of much of their ethical reflection. This creates a

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[48] Philip J. Ivanhoe, and Xiusheng Liu, *Essay on the Moral Philosophy of Mengzi* (Cambridge, MA: Hackett Publishing, 2002), 221.

paradox since most Chinese people consider that they have a better moral standard than other nations and peoples given that they have Confucius' moral teaching dating back to 2500 years ago. However, in spite of their superior moral background, they have the feeling that they are not able to achieve their Old Master's standard through their own self-cultivation efforts. We believe that this disconnect provides a great   opportunity to make Chinese people understand that only Jesus is the way, the truth and the life since higher moral standards and better education cannot cause a person to reach the way, the truth and the life.

CHAPTER FOUR

PROJECT DESIGN

Introduction

In chapter one, I discussed the importance of raising up a new generation of the

Chinese young people to be disciples of Jesus Christ in the 21st century. I also argued that

there is a new need for Chinese Christians to know how to live out their faith in the

workplace while dealing with rapid technological change which is urgent and important.

In chapter two, I discussed theology related to technology, work, and Chinese culture.

And in chapter three, I reviewed some scholarly literature in these aforementioned

related areas. In chapter four, I will try to propose a project to implement a workplace

Christian discipleship program. After finishing the project, the participants will be asked

to answer some questions from a designed questionnaire.

This project of the workplace discipleship program consists of eight lessons for

the Chinese churches about theology of work in the technological environment. My goal

in developing this project material is to provide a biblical perspective through which

Chinese Christians can understand their work and know the meaning of it, so that they

are motivated to take actions as Jesus Christ disciples accordingly. The main problems

and issues which were asked in chapter one – the problems and setting – will be asked

throughout each of the eight lessons. Most of the content of the eight lessons has been

discussed either in chapter two or chapter three. In addition to the problem and setting

and primary content, I will also add some common concerns and material in each lesson

beside the topics covered in chapter two and chapter three. Each lesson will also include some application and small group discussion questions. This material could be used as an eight-week Sunday school class. It could also be implemented as a one-day workshop. The project is mainly designed for a workplace discipleship program.

Here is the list of eight lessons:

1. The gap between our faith and work in the technological environment

2. Theology of Technology – What is the biblical view of technology?

3. Is my technological work holy? - Some practical discussion

4. Theology of Work – Does God care about my work?

5. Bring your faith to work everyday

6. Understanding Chinese culture – from their work and thinking

7. What could we do differently as Chinese Christians?

8. Are we, Chinese Christians, good workers in the eyes of God?

Allow me to share a short history of developing the project. I started a theology of work workshop in 2010 at Chinese Bible Church of Greater Lowell. The main focus of the workshop was providing an interest to quest the meaning of our modern work. During the workshop, I was asked many practical and real-life questions relating to the workshop participants' current job. I then found that most of them are working for technological jobs. In the summer of 2013, I was teaching six Sunday school lessons that I planned as part of my thesis-project. I added some the theology of technology lessons from previous theology of work workshop. In 2014, when I had a third chance to work with a discipleship program for the Christian at work, I added Chinese culture of work

components into this discipleship training program. The 8 lesson discipleship program

design is also based on Dr. Al Erisman's advice that the program needs to avoid

becoming three different workshops, where I talk about theology of work, theology of

technology and Chinese culture of work separately. Instead, in this 8 lesson discipleship

program, I try to have more integration within each lesson for each one of the three

different topics. Therefore, I designed the first lesson to be the issues and concerns

about the gap between faith and work from a technological perspective for Chinese

churches. In lesson two, I talked about theology of technology. Then, immediately

following lesson two, I talked about some integration in lesson three. The integration

part in lesson three includes more discussion about the issues and concerns for Chinese

Christians working in a technological environment. It is very similar to the design idea for

lesson 4 and 5, in which I talked about the theology of work and bringing your faith to

one's workplace. In Lesson 5, I discussed more integration of theology of work for

Chinese workers along with some technological concerns as well. I repeated the same

design for lesson 6 and 7, where I talked about understanding Chinese workers' culture

of work and their thinking in lesson 6. In lesson 7, I talked about practical issues that

Chinese Christians could do better in response to lesson 6's content. Finally, I have a

summarized lesson in lesson 8 to review what have discussed in the previous lesson as a

final reflection for the program.

Project Design Objective

This project originally is designed to help Chinese Church Christians to train more

disciples of Jesus Christ for work in the 21st Century. However, it is not the objective for

this project to be a comprehensive discipleship program. This project aims to be a

supplement of a traditional discipleship program. The hypothesis for this thesis-project

is that there are some gaps between the emerging technological workplace and the

Chinese Christian's faith. Hopefully, with the help of this project, the gaps could be

mitigated or become smaller.

As far as the project participants, since the issues and concerns are about

Chinese Church, it is very easy to understand the first and foremost target attendants for

this project shall be Chinese Christians. However, even within a Chinese church, there

are people from other ethnic groups. For example, there are Korean Christians,

Caucasian Christians, and African Christians in a Chinese American Church as well. They

joined Chinese American Church for different reasons, like serving, teaching, or simply

invited by Chinese Christians friends and later decided to stay. With that being said, this

project design could also benefit other Christians who may want to know Chinese

Christians better, so that they could advance the kingdom of God among Chinese people

worldwide. This project design could also inform Christians within Chinese churches of a

broad theology of work.

In chapter two, in relation to genuine disciples of Jesus Christ, I discussed

qualifications[1] which may be considered as possible workplace culture changers, which

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[1] Don Hamilton, *Tentmakers Speak: Practical Advice Form over 400 Missionary Tentmakers* (Grand Rapids:

are:

1. He needs to know his calling from God and be committed to doing it

2. He needs to be spiritually qualified

3. He needs a team to work together

4. He needs social skills

5. He needs a proper perspective on Work and Ministry

6. He needs professional qualification

7. He needs to like taking on new challenges

8. He needs to have knowledge and passion for technological work

These qualifications could be a high standard for disciples of Jesus Christ in the workplace. These qualifications will not be used as selection criteria for workplace discipleship program participants. However, they could serve as a possible standard target for workplace discipleship training.

The design of the thesis-project could also be aligned with my personal mission statement, which is: "Joining God's Mission to share, testify and lift up the salvation of Jesus Christ who died for us and defeated brokenness, sins and death and calling and working with God's people around the world together to teach, baptize & disciple those believe in Jesus Christ, so that the Kingdom of God is expanded to all the people of all nations." The focus of this thesis-project design is to make disciples for Jesus Christ from those who believed in Christ but who have some hesitations to share and testify to their faith at work. This thesis-project is not trying to replace the traditional discipleship

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Baker, 1989), 1-15.

program, but to enhance and extend the discipleship program to reach its application to the workplace area. In the past four years, from 2011 to 2014, Chinese Bible Church of Greater Lowell has had more than 80 Chinese Christians who have participated in a traditional discipleship program. As most of the Chinese church members from Chinese Bible Church of Greater Lowell had a very good experience utilizing the previous discipleship model, I decided to continue to use the same discipleship model.

So, what is the previous discipleship model we utilized? From 2011 to 2015, I have implemented a discipleship program by adopting Greg Ogden's book titled "Discipleship Essentials." The basic design of Ogden's discipleship program has three major pillars:[2]

1. Relational Transparency: Our willingness to become self-revealing with other believers on the journey toward maturity in Christ (horizontal) is the critical sign that we truly want the Lord (vertical) to remake us into His image.
2. Truth in Community: If we want the Scripture to become more than compartmentalized information, we must study, meditate and memorize the Word in a relationally interactive setting.
3. Life-Change Accountability: We need partners on the journey that will not only witness that we have filled in the blanks of our discipleship manual, but know the struggles we fight to overcome and loving stand with us as we live into a new reality.

Therefore, these three major pillars are the fundamental components in the Greg Ogden's model as well as in our thesis-project discipleship program. Greg Ogden's discipleship covers four parts:

Part One: Growing up in Christ. There are six lessons in this part: Making

Disciples, Being a disciple, Quiet Time, Bible Study, Prayer, and Worship.

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[2] Greg Ogden, *Discipleship Essentials: A Guide to Building Your Life in Christ*, (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2007), 9-13.

Part Two: Understanding the Message of Christ. There are seven lessons in part two: The three-person God, Made in God's image, Sin, Grace, Redemption, Justification, and Adoption.

Part Three: Becoming like Christ. There are six lessons in part three: Filled with the Holy Spirit, Fruit of the Holy Spirit, Trust, Love, Justice, and Witness.

Part Four: Serving Christ. There are six lessons in part four: The Church, Ministry Gifts, Spiritual Warfare, Walking in Obedience, Sharing the Wealth, and Money.

The above discipleship program is a pre-requisite for the workplace discipleship program. That is, I would like to ask all the participants in the workplace discipleship program to have finished Greg Ogden's discipleship essentials program first and then join the workplace discipleship program.

Why have Greg Ogden's discipleship program as a pre-requisite? I think there are at least three reasons. First, there is a commitment to be Jesus Christ's disciples through which all the participants will sign a disciple covenant when they are in Ogden's program. This covenant indicates that they commit to complete the program and are willing to continue to share with others in the discipleship program. The workplace discipleship program will have the same commitment from the participants. Second, a complete discipleship program covers a brief understanding regarding the Gospel, Salvation, Sin, the Church and Spiritual Growth. The workplace discipleship program is not designed to cover all of these basics. Instead, it is designed to build on them. Third, a transparent and safe sharing model is built into Ogden's discipleship model. This kind of transparent and safe sharing environment is also needed in the workplace discipleship

program.

Finally, the format of the workplace discipleship program project involves a small group of six members only, including myself. The intent of this project is to have a fully open sharing opportunity during the discipleship program. Usually, each lesson lasts about 90 minutes to give the discipleship participants enough time to share the questions we discuss.

CHAPTER FIVE

OUTCOMES

Introduction

In chapter four, I shared the short history of my teaching workplace theology at the Chinese Bible Church of Greater Lowell. I started teaching theology of work as a Sunday school class in 2010. The final thesis-project design, however, is designed as a workplace discipleship program. The main reason for this project design change from a Sunday school class to a discipleship program is to focus on addressing the issue I discussed in chapter one: there is a new need for Chinese Christians to know how to live out their faith in the workplace while dealing with rapid technology change which is both urgent and important. In order to address this urgent concern, I compared the two approaches. A Sunday school program is more instructor-led and more informative. The advantage of a Sunday school program is that more students could attend. On the other hand, however, the drawback is less interaction between instructor and attendants.

The project design focuses on a 6-person discipleship group, including myself. The advantage of this design keeps the flexibility to have more time for discussion. The attendants can ask questions freely, most of the time, during the discipleship program. Moreover, they feel safe to share some of their personal difficulties at work. So, we could easily have three main parts to the discipleship program: Information Sharing, Question Discussion and Praying & Support. Usually, the Praying and Support part is the last 15 minutes of the program. Information Sharing and Question Discussion are interwoven throughout the first 75 minutes. When I implemented the workplace

discipleship program, we usually met on Friday mornings between 7:30 am to 9:00 am.

All the discipleship program attendants were working in the Information Technology

industry, either in the software or hardware field. Their ages ranged from 35 to 50 with

working experience ranging from 15 to 30 years.

Research Methodology

I used questionnaires to ask some questions in part one and part two. Part one

questions are about knowing the meaning of work. Part two questions are about loving

Jesus Christ. In part three, I asked open-ended questions to put into action the content

that the discipleship program participants may want to implement after the program.

Evaluation of the Project

Cognitive Level - Do they have a better understanding of the meaning of their work?

I asked the same questions to find out their understanding of the meaning of

their daily technological work before and after the discipleship program. Originally, I was

thinking their understanding would increase after the Workplace Discipleship Program.

However, the result is that they did not. 40% of the respondents remained pretty much

the same before and after the program. Another 40% of the respondents actually

dropped in their scores, meaning they rated themselves as having less understanding of

the meaning of their work after the workshop. Only 20% of the respondents said their

understanding was increased. However, the increase was not too significant. It was from

a 5-6 level to 6-7 level.

Why did the result not match with what I expected? The answer is not all negative. Those who decreased their understanding score after the workplace discipleship program expressed that the initial score that they gave was actually overrated. They said that they understood better about the meaning of their work having completed the program. Those who decreased their level of understanding dropped from a 6-7 level to a 3-4 level. However, the discipleship program did help them to think about more dimensions related to their work. Many of the issues at work were intuitive to them before. They are more thoughtful regarding their work and thus have more questions and concerns about their work now. They expressed their desire to have this discipleship program extended for more lessons in order to discuss personal questions and issues at work.

The other 40% of respondents remaining at the same level before and after the Workplace Discipleship Program said that they feel the information they learned was helpful. However, they do not consider that the information learned has made any difference in the meaning of their work.

How about the last 20% of the response? Yes, he did say this discipleship program inspired him to think about the meaning of his job and what God thinks about his work.

Affective Level - Do they love Jesus more?

Again, I asked the same questions before and after the Workplace Discipleship Program. 100% of the response for this question remained the same after the program. 60% of the respondents expressed that they are in level 7-8. Another 40% said they are in level 6-7. Obviously, all of them love Jesus Christ and considered themselves to be Christ's disciples and would like to follow his Great Commandment. While designing this Workplace Discipleship Program, I expected the participants would grow to a higher level in their love of Jesus. However, there was no change after the program.

Why was there no change in loving Jesus Christ more? Was it because of anything wrong with the discipleship program design? I think the main issue is the matter of time. People needed more time to digest what they learned and what they could change to love Jesus more. Two to three months was pretty short. People do not easily change in such a short period of time. Consider that about all of the participants have a background in engineering. They tend to be more rational minded. From one hand, this program did help them to think about more questions at work. On the other hand, their answers before the program are either in level of 6-7 or level 7-8. I am not saying that those scores are too high but starting at a higher level in their original score, the more difficult it is for them to move up a level, given that there are only 10 levels.

Evaluative Level – Did they commit to take any actions at work?

The response to this part is very exciting. 100% of the respondents said yes. I left room for the participants to give their action items in lesson 3, lesson 5, lesson 7 and lesson 8 respectively. The learning from each lesson inspired them to think about what

action they might take.

So, what kind of actions did they take? The action items can be broken into four categories:

- First category: They may experience some ethical concerns at work. For example, should I be 100% honest about my project schedule? They may have come up with a new action for this type of ethical question.

- Second category: They may experience interpersonal problems with colleagues, other departments, and/or a manager. For example, should I work to keep a good relationship with people from other departments? What if those people are considered to be internal rivals to my department? Based on what they learned, they may have decided to implement some new action.

- Third category: They may want to have a better devotional life before going to work every day. Some expressed their resolution to take action in this area.

- Fourth category: They may want to share their faith with other colleagues. Before the program, they thought this to be impossible. However, they now think they may want to try witnessing during informal occasions.

Conclusion

I think this project, as it was designed, has reached some objectives as I expected, however, not 100% of the objectives were fulfilled. I think overall this project did inspire participants to think about their faith and work. However, the theology of work part was

not that easy to model/teach and then influence them in a span of three months. I think I can understand most of the issues related to theology of work – it is because of my theological education experience and time spent on thinking through the issues was much longer than theirs. The expectations in this part could be adjusted to not be too high. However, this project did inspire them to take some actions regarding their faith and how it affects their work. I did not have enough time to trace with them the results of their action items. Based on these results, I have a conclusion that a combination of theology of work, theology of technology and theological reflection on the impact of Chinese culture could benefit Chinese Christians for them to grow up into more genuine, faithful workplace disciples. However, this conclusion could not be confirmed without a longitudinal study. A short three-month workplace discipleship program is worthy to try. If the Chinese Church would like to have a better harvest in the mission field that is the workplace, a greater length of time, support and effort needs to be considered in future implementation.

What Could We Do Next?

1. Teach Multi-lingually: Using both English and Mandarin to teach. I used Mandarin Chinese to initiate the workplace discipleship program in November of 2014. We could try to have a similar workplace discipleship program in English. I could also try to have similar programs in Taiwanese and Cantonese with help from other pastors or ministers.

2. Translate Materials: Another possibility to benefit a greater number of churches

would be to translate all the project design materials into Chinese and use them in different Chinese churches around the world.

3. Reach disciples beyond the Chinese Ethnic Church: This project material may also benefit some non-Chinese churches, who have ethnic Chinese members in the church.

4. Create Online Resources: This project could create an online repository. Recording a short video and giving training material on the website could benefit more churches worldwide.

5. Go to University campus: This project could offer Chinese student fellowships in different universities a training program for workplace discipleship.

6. Utilize Social Media: This project could leverage social media for future resource sharing. On-going support and sharing are essential for continuous discipleship.

7. Incorporate a workplace discipleship program with a Language program (For example, ELS program) in local churches: Many local churches have provided English language program for new immigrants. It will be good if a short version of workplace discipleship introduction could combine with ESL program,

8. Work on more case studies. Identify 4-5 workplace discipleship case studies in the following areas: Large enterprise working environment, Small business, Factory, Government, School, and SOHO/home business. I could further discuss some issues like overwork, underpay, corruption and etc.

APPENDIX

WORKPLACE DISCIPLESHIP PROGRAM POWERPOINT SLIDES

Workplace Discipleship Program

Pastor Hsing-Cheng James Chung

February 2015

Eight Lessons

- The gap between our faith and work in the technological environment
- Theology of Technology – What is the biblical view of technology?
- Is my technological work holy? - Some practical discussion
- Theology of Work – Does God care about my work?
- Bring your faith to work everyday
- Understanding Chinese culture – from their work and thinking
- What could we do differently as Chinese Christians?
- Are we, Chinese Christians, good workers in the eyes of God?

Lesson 1

- The gap between our faith and work in the technological environment
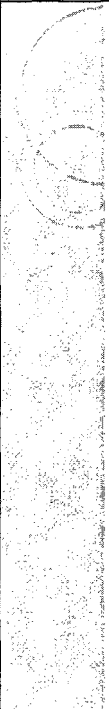
Gap between Sunday and Monday

- Sunday sermon and Bible message come to them with little or no connection to the business world.
- Pastor is too busy to worry about something like the relationship between "Sunday and Monday?"
- Church has other priority?

Questions

* Do you often relate your workplace situation and issues to what you hear in the Sunday sermon?
* Do you communicate this with your pastor?
* Do you think your pastor has less practical knowledge of your workplace issues?

The gap between Sunday and Monday in the technology era

* **The technology train is running faster than we expected**
* Do you bring your Bible to church now?
* Do you read any messages from your smart phone during Sunday service?

Are we driving Technology or we are driven by Technology?

- We are forced to accept some technologies.
- Technology – Good or Bad?

Bible and Technology

- Does the Bible have anything to say about Technology?
- What kind of work are you doing? Does it involve technology?

Chinese Churches Culture and Issues

- *Top of the Class: How Asian Parents Raise High Achievers and How You Can Too*

TOP OF THE
CLASS

How Asian
Parents
Raise
High
Achievers—
and How
You Can
Too

DR. SOO KIM ABBOUD
and JANE KIM
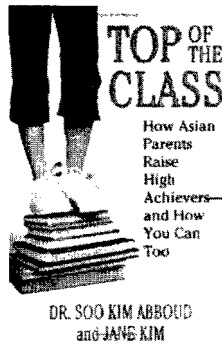
Is this an issue?

- Is there anything wrong with this pursuit of academic success and job security?

Do you agree?

- The growth of the Chinese Church and maturity of Chinese Christians will play an important role to advance the kingdom of God in the 21st century.

Questions

- What do you observe from the Chinese Churches?
- Share some of the good things you've seen in Chinese churches.
- Share some concerns you have regarding Chinese church.
- What do you think is the role of Chinese churches within global Christianity?

END OF LESSON 1

Lesson 2

- Theology of Technology – What is the biblical view of technology?

Several Questions Christians will ask?

- Does God care about the type of work I am doing?
- Is my technological job a good job in the eyes of God? (Or Is my job Biblical ?)
- Does God know about Technology?

Technology – Jesus the Carpenter's son

- 這不是木匠的兒子麼 · **Matthew 13:55**
- Is not this the carpenter's son?
- οὐχ οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ τοῦ τέκτονος υἱός;
- 木匠 Techon (Carpenter)

What is Technology?

- We are all holding technological jobs more or less
- We use technology to increase competitiveness

What is Technology?

- Technology is a tool. We shape our tools and our tools shape us.
- Technology itself is embedded with values, some helpful and others harmful.
- Biblical stories of Creation, Fall, Redemption and Restoration have deep connections with Technology.

What is Technology?

- "**Technology** (from Greek τέχνη, techne, "art, skill, cunning of hand"; and -λογία, -logia) is the making, modification, usage, and knowledge of tools, machines, techniques, crafts, systems, and methods of organization, in order to solve a problem, improve a pre-existing solution to a problem, achieve a goal, handle an applied input/output relation or perform a specific function. It can also refer to the collection of such tools, including machinery, modifications, arrangements and procedures."
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Technology
03/23/2014

Technology?

- **We shape our tools and our tools shape us.**
  - **We transform the current world into the world that we desire.**
  - **We use technology to transform our world but John Dyers also argues that we are transformed by the technology**
  - **Technology transforms the world and ourselves by finding its way into our souls.**
    - **Technology, exalted to the place of God, is an idol.**
    - **Has not technology come to embody our chief values – the things we want most out of life?**

What is Technology?

- **Technology itself is embedded with values, some helpful and others harmful**
  - Postman said "Technopoly(科技壟斷)is a state of culture. It is also a state of mind. It consists in the deification of technology, which means that the culture seeks its authorization in technology, finds its satisfactions in technology, and takes its orders from technology."

What is Technology?

- David Gill argues technology is not good or evil; it is good and evil.
- Gill said this: "Technology is not simply evil, but it is terrible mistake if we give all technology a free 'pass' on ethic."

Biblical Stories with Technology

- Four-"R"s (Reflection, Rebellion, Redemption and Restoration)
  - First, from the story of creation, we found that our ability to make technology is a reflection of our Creator.

Biblical Stories with Technology

- Four-"R"s (Reflection, Rebellion, Redemption and Restoration)
  - Second, from the fall, we found that every technology has the potential to be used for sin and rebellion.

Biblical Stories with Technology

● Four-"R"s (Reflection, Rebellion, Redemption and Restoration)

　❋Technology can be used for redemptive purposes, temporarily overcoming the effects of the fall and serving the embodied life of Christ in the believer.

Biblical Stories with Technology

● Four-"R"s (Reflection, Rebellion, Redemption and Restoration)

　❋Thankfully, at the end of the biblical story, we find that God's plans include the restoration of all things, including some of the things we make.

We ask the same questions again
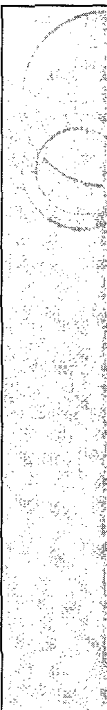
- Does God care about the type of work I am doing?
- Is my technological job a good job in the eyes of God? (Or Is my job Biblical ?)
- Does God know about Technology?
- What do you think about Technology?

END OF LESSON 2

Lesson 3

- Is my technological work holy? - Some practical discussion

The Meaning of Technological Work

- One high-tech Christian describes his perspective on the meaning of his job.
- "The world of a high-technology worker is a strange combination of the future and the past. We work on things that only a small percentage of the population understands in organizations that have all the problems and perplexities of any other organization. This strange combination gives high-technology work its particular complexion. While we work on the cutting edge, we face the same ancient issues of other workers. And, if the truth be told, most high-technology work is much like any other kind of work: repetitive and mundane."

The Meaning of Technological Work

- High-tech work involves some simple problems. But they are very difficult to resolve. It requires a lot of creativity and problem solving skills.
- High-tech work sometimes will involve the defense industry. In such work, people may have concerns that the products they made could be used in the war which may directly or indirectly kill people.
- Their work or projects could be a very small part, which is often not an end product, within a huge project. Collaboration and integration with other teams and other members could be even more important than their own project.
- They may create a new product or result which may pose new problems for human society.

The Meaning of Technological Work

- "In some ways, high-technology work is much like God's own creation exnihilo (a Latin phrase meaning "out of nothing").
- Computer software starts with nothing and creates its own universe with a few lines of code. That universe might be a kids' alphabet-learning program or a spreadsheet, but the programmers build it from nothing. They tell the new creatures of their universe, the icons and mouse pointers and function keys, what they will do and how they will do it."

The Meaning of Technological Work

- Basically, all technological work gives others the tools and the context for their further creativity. Here is a conclusion for the meaning of technological work: It is the same as other type of works. It is nothing more and nothing less. Those who work with technology are working for themselves to satisfy their basic needs, express their gifts from God and grow in their spiritual formation. They are working to show their love and care to their families and their neighbors. They are working for God to advance His kingdom.

Toward a theology of Technology

- God's creativity as the source of human theological imagination.

- Human creativity is bounded.

- Human technology now needs redemption.

- Human technology must keep the end in view.

Small Group Discussion Questions

- What kind of technological work do you do? (Briefly share your work)
- What do you think about it's meaning in the eyes of God? Does your work fit into any of the 4 R's – Reflection, Rebellion, Redemption, and Restoration?
- Any question you may have?
- Any prayer request for your work?

What do you think?

- Ephesians 2:10 ¹⁰ 我們原是他的工作、在基督耶穌裡造成的、為要叫我們行善、就是　神所預備叫我們行的?
- ᴱˢⱽ Ephesians 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

END OF LESSON 3

Lesson 4

- Theology of Work – Does God care about my work?

What does God care about?
上帝關心什麼?

- God cares about
  - Church
  - Mission
  - Discipleship
  - Pastors
  - New Christians
  - Church Budget

- But, How about my job?
  - Does He care about my job or my offering?

Theology of Work

- God works, so we work
- Sin entered the world and left work broken
- Jesus brings redemption to the brokenness of work
- We are God's co-workers
- Why Work?

The definition of Work

- Two general groups of meaning
- Work sometimes means something we do not love to do but we have the responsibility to do. It is even a hardship and toil.
- 'Work' in the Bible has a positive meaning. This work brings you joy – a meaningful, creative, sense of accomplishment.

First - God works, so we work

- Planning and Creation
- Evaluation and Assessment
- Beauty and Function
- Collaborative Activity
- Delegation
- Excellence
- Continuing Value
- Rest
- Setting Boundaries

God commands Human beings

- Be Fruitful and Multiply
- Rule over the earth
- Tend the garden
- Name the animals
- Live within the new boundaries

Second - Sin entered the world and left work broken

- The Break between Humankind and God
- The Break within Humankind
- The Break between Humankind and its work

Third - Jesus brings redemption to the brokenness of work

- 神的救贖立即展開 God's redemption began immediately
- 神的救贖在基督裏達成一個特殊點 It reaches a special point in Christ
- 當基督再來時達到最高點 It culminates when Christ returns
- 我們認為福音是甚麼？ What do we mean by the gospel?
- 我們自己的角色在與人分享這福音時是甚麼？ What is our role in sharing this good news?
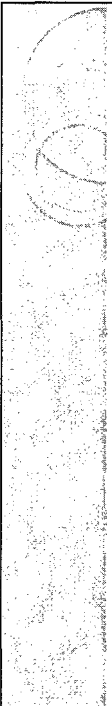- -from Gill and Erisman Class

Fourth - We are God's co-workers

- We were created to be God's co-worker
- First Corinthians 3:9 "For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building."

Fifth – Why Work?

- We work for survival
- We work for identity and meaning
- We work for love
- We work for service
- We work for growth
- We work for the Kingdom that will last forever
- We work for God
- Stevens, R. Paul, Spiritual Fire at Workplace Seminars notes, Taipei, Taiwan, 2010

Our proposal – Why work?

- We work for ourselves
- We work for others
- We work for God

Question?

- Do you think God cares about your job now?
- How do you compare your work and your pastor's work?
- Why do you work?

END OF LESSON 4

Lesson 5

- Bring your faith to work everyday

A Question before we continue

- Do you think we will have a vocation in heaven?

The Eternal Value of Our Work

- But…

  Is our work ultimately meaningful, or only in this life?
  我們工作有沒有永恆的價值? 或是只有今生有用?

  "The only thing we take into heaven with us are our relationships"
  我們帶進永恆只有我們的「關係」

我們在新天新地做什麼工作 What Will We Be Doing in Heaven?

- Ruling 執掌管理

  Revelation 5:9-10 ⁹ 他們唱新歌、說、你配拿書卷、配揭開七印‧因為你曾被殺、用自己的血從各族各方、各民各國中買了人來、叫他們歸於 神、¹⁰ 又叫他們成為國民、作祭司、歸於 神‧在地上執掌王權。

- Trade 貿易

  Isaiah 60:5-6 ⁵ 那時你看見就有光榮、你心又跳動、又寬暢‧因為大海豐盛的貨物必轉來歸你、列國的財寶、也必來歸你‧ ⁶ 成群的駱駝、並米甸和以法的獨峰駝、必遮滿你‧示巴的眾人、都必來到‧要奉上黃金乳香、又要傳說耶和華的讚美‧

我們在新天新地做什麼工作 What Will We Be Doing in Heaven?

- Ruling 執掌管理

  Revelation 5:9-10 ⁹ And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, ¹⁰ and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth."

- Trade 貿易

  Isaiah 60:5-6 ⁵ Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and exult, because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you. ⁶ A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall bring good news, the praises of the LORD.

詩篇 Psalm 8:1-9

- Psalm 8:1 〔大衛的詩、交與伶長、用迦特樂器。〕 耶和華我們的主阿、你的名在全地何其美．你將你的榮耀彰顯於天。 ² 你因敵人的緣故、從嬰孩和喫奶的口中、建立了能力、使仇敵和報仇的、閉口無言。

- ³ 我觀看你指頭所造的天、並你所陳設的月亮星宿、 ⁴ 便說、人算甚麼、你竟顧念他．世人算甚麼、你竟眷顧他。

- ⁵ 你叫他比天使〔或作 神〕微小一點、並賜他榮耀尊貴為冠冕。 ⁶ 你派他管理你手所造的、使萬物、就是一切的牛羊、田野的獸、空中的鳥、海裡的魚、凡經行海道的、都服在他的腳下。 ⁷ 見上節 ⁸ 見上節 ⁹ 耶和華我們的主阿、你的名在全地何其美。

詩篇Psalm 8:1-9

- Psalm 8:1-9 ESV Psalm 8:1 *To the choirmaster: according to The Gittith. A Psalm of David. O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens.* [2] *Out of the mouth of babies and infants, you have established strength because of your foes, to still the enemy and the avenger.* [3] *When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,* [4] *what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him?* [5] *Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor.* [6] *You have given him dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet,* [7] *all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field,* [8] *the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas.* [9] *O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!*

羅馬書Romans 1:19-20

- Romans 1:19-20 [19] 神的事情、人所能知道的、原顯明在人心裡．因為 神已經給他們顯明。 [20] 自從造天地以來、 神的永能和神性是明明可知的、雖是眼不能見、但藉著所造之物、就可以曉得、叫人無可推諉．

- Romans 1:19-20 [19] **For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them.** [20] **For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.**

湯姆 賴特 N.T. Wright

"When we talk with biblical precision about the
resurrection, we discover an excellent
foundation for lively and creative Christian
work in the present world—not, as some
suppose, for an escapist or quietist piety."當我
們仔細地按著聖經談論復活時，我們發
現一個對於基督徒現今工作既活潑又有
創意的基礎，而非，像有人以為 (指現
今工作)是為了逃避現實或主張清靜無
為者的虔誠。 "

湯姆 賴特 N.T. Wright

"Thus the church that takes sacred space
seriously (not as a retreat from the world but
as a bridgehead into it) will go straight from
worshiping in the sanctuary to debating in the
council chambers, to discussing matters of town
planning…"因此教會，需要認真對待我
們神聖的地位（而不是作為從世界撤退，
但把它作為一個橋頭堡）從只在會堂崇
拜而前往市政會議，討論城市規劃的問
題……

Question

• Do you agree with NT Wright?

Luther's View of Work

• Luther's theology is well known as 'justification by faith alone' and 'the priesthood of all believers.' His view about the meaning of work focuses on the believer's vocation. Through all the different vocations, Christians are blessing their neighbors. That is the fulfillment of God's work. He emphasized that **there is no one vocation more spiritual than any other**. Considering the relationship between faith and work, Luther argued that work done by the clergy and the laity is equal, as long as the work is from faith and within the guidance of Holy Spirit.

• Wingren, Gustaf (translated by Carl C Rasmussen), Luther on Vocation , Wipf & Stock Publishers (February 28, 2004)

• Lecture notes of Dr. Gordon Isaac, 2009, Mockler Center Speech, Luther on vocation.

Calvin's view on work

- Calvin's view on work is similar to that of Luther. Hart summarized five points for Calvin's view on work:
- 1. God's providence;
- 2. Remaining in one's calling;
- 3. Service to Others;
- 4. Spiritual Significance of Ordinary Work;
- 5. The equal value of all kinds of work.

  - Hart. Ian, "The Teaching of Luther and Calvin about Ordinary Work: 2. John Calvin(1509-1564)" Evangelical Quarterly, 1995, pp 124-128

Question

- How do you think about your work?
- Do you think God gives your work a very high value?
- Do you think your faith is important to your work?
- Do you think your work has any impact to your faith now?
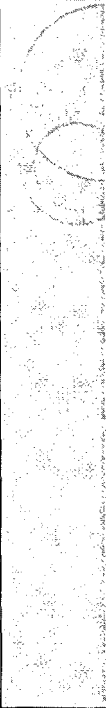
END OF LESSON 5

Lesson 6

- Understanding Chinese culture – from their work and thinking

Chinese Culture Impact

- There were more than 800,000 international students enrolled in US colleges and universities in 2012. Among these 800,000 international students, China sent the most students to the USA, totaling 235,597 which is about 30% of the total number of international students. That number grew about 21% from 194,029 in the previous year.
- "Nearly 390,000 students went abroad to study last year (2012), and around 270,000 came back. Jobs in sales, marketing, and research and development are among the most popular for the returnees. The skills gained during their studies are the most needed for China's globalization. This is a selling point in recruitment."

Which Restaurant open in Thanksgiving?

- Chinese Restaurant
- Why?

Why do Chinese people always work hard?

- Good or Bad?

Understand Chinese More

- *Language that shapes the mind:* More "How" than "What"
- *The Law of Yin (陰) and Yang (陽) – The Unity of Opposites:*
- *Chinese Connectedness – "Born Equal" vs "Born Connected":* Individualism is not a concept originally rooted in the Chinese mind.
- *Midstream Living:* Chinese people admire balance and harmony in everything and the midstream philosophy, called Zhong Yong (中庸), is the golden rule.
- *Face (面子 · MianZi) – More Important Than Life Itself.* MianZi (Face) is a person's reputation and social status. It is equivalent to that person's brand or even more than that.

The impact of Ancient Chinese to our Work Culture

- Those four basic books are: Great Learning (大學), Doctrine of the Mean (中庸), Analects (論語), and Mencius (孟子).
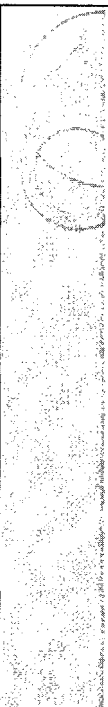
Mencius (Mengzi孟子)

孟子見梁惠王。王曰：「叟！不遠千里而來，亦將有以利吾國乎？」

孟子對曰：「王！何必曰利？亦有仁義而已矣。王曰：『何以利吾國？』大夫曰：『何以利吾家？』士庶人曰：『何以利吾身？』上下交征利而國危矣。萬乘之國，弒其君者，必千乘之家；千乘之國，弒其君者，必百乘之家。萬取千焉，千取百焉，不為不多矣。苟為後義而先利，不奪不饜。未有仁而遺其親者也，未有義而後其君者也。王亦曰仁義而已矣，何必曰利？」

Mencius (Mengzi孟子)

- Mencius (Mengzi孟子) I.AI
- *Mengzi had an audience with King Hui of Liang. The King said, "Sir, you have come, not regarding one thousand li (Miles) as too far. Surely you will have something to profit my state?"*
- *Mengzi said in response, "Why must Your Majesty say, 'profit'? Let there be benevolence and righteousness and that is all. Your Majesty says, 'How can my state be profited?' The Counsellors say, 'How can my family be profited?' The scholars and commoners say, 'How can I be profited?' Those above and those below mutually compete for profit and the state is endangered.*
- *In a case where the ruler of a state that can field ten thousand chariots is murdered, it must be by a family that can field a thousand chariots. In a case where the ruler of a state that can field a thousand chariots is murdered, it must be by a family that can field a hundred chariots. One thousand out of ten thousand, or one hundred out of a thousand, cannot be considered to not be a lot. But if righteousness is put behind and profit is put ahead, one will not be satisfied without grasping from others.*

Profit(利) vs. Benevolence and Righteousness (仁義)

- Profits and Benevolence and Righteousness
- Which trumps when there is conflicts?

Analects (論語) - Education is important

- 學而第一：
- 子曰：「學而時習之，不亦說乎？有朋自遠方來，不亦樂乎？人不知而不慍，不亦君子乎？」學而：
- 孔子說：「經常學習，不也喜悅嗎？遠方來了朋友，不也快樂嗎？得不到理解而不怨恨，不也是君子嗎？」

Analects (論語) - Education is important

- *The Master said, "To learn, and then have occasion to practice what you have learned—is this not satisfying? To have friends arrive from afar— is this not a joy? To be patient even when others do not understand—is this not the mark of the gentleman?"*

Education is important

- 述而第一:
- 子曰:「述而不作,信而好古,竊比於我老彭。」
- 孔子說:「傳授知識而不從事創作,相信先人而又愛好古代典籍,我可以自比於商朝時的老彭。」
- 述而第二:
- 子曰:「默而識之,學而不厭,誨人不倦,何有於我哉?」
- 孔子說:「將知識默記在心,學習時,不感到滿足;教人時,不感到疲倦,對我來說沒什麼問題。」

Education is important

- *7.1 The Master said, "I transmit rather than innovate, I trust in and love the ancient way. I might thus humbly compare myself to Old Peng."*
- *7.2 The Master said, "Remaining silent and yet comprehending, learning and yet never becoming tired, encouraging others and never growing weary, these are tasks that present me with no difficulty."*

Great Learning – Self Improving

- 大學:
- 大學之道，在明明德，在親民，在止於至善。知止而後有定，定而後能靜，靜而後能安，安而後能慮，慮而後能得。物有本末，事有終始，知所先後，則近道矣。

Great Learning – Self Improving

- *The way of great learning consists in manifesting one's bright virtue, consists in loving the people, consists in stopping in perfect goodness.*
- *When you know where to stop, you have stability. When you have stability, you can be tranquil. When you are tranquil, you can be at ease. When you are at ease, you can deliberate. When you can deliberate you can attain your aims.*
- *Things have their roots and branches, affairs have their end and beginning. When you know what comes first and what comes last, then you are near the Way.*
- *The ancients who wanted to manifest their bright virtue to all in the world first governed well their own states. Wanting to govern well their states, they first harmonized their own clans. Wanting to harmonize their own clan, they first cultivated themselves. Wanting to cultivate themselves, they first corrected their minds. Wanting to correct their minds, they first made their wills sincere. Wanting to make their wills sincere, they first extended their knowledge. Extension of knowledge consists of the investigation of things.*

Doctrine of the Mean

- 喜怒哀樂之未發，謂之中；發而皆中節，謂之和；中也者，天下之大本也；和也者，天下之達道也。致中和，天地位焉，萬物育焉。

- 仲尼曰：「君子中庸，小人反中庸。君子之中庸也，君子而時中；小人之中庸也，小人而無忌憚也。」

- *"When joy, anger, sorrow and pleasure have not yet arisen, it is called the Mean (中 centeredness, equilibrium). When they arise to their appropriate levels, it is called "harmony" 和. The Mean is the great root of all-under-heaven. "Harmony" is the penetration of the Way through all-under-heaven. When the Mean and Harmony are actualized, Heaven and Earth are in their proper positions, and the myriad things are nourished."*

- *Confucius said: "The Superior Man actualizes the mean; the inferior man goes against it. The Superior Man actualizes the mean because he is always with it; the inferior man's non-actualization is due to his heedlessness."*

Questions

- Share your thoughts of Chinese Culture.
- Do your parents hold any special teaching for your family?
- Share anything you think about Chinese Culture and Christian Faith matching nicely?
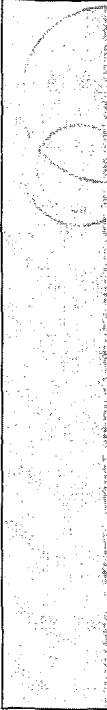- How about any of the differences you think there are between Chinese Culture and Christian Faith?

END OF LESSON 6

Lesson 7

- What could we do differently as Chinese Christians?

Work View difference of Chinese vs. Westerns

• Contents vs. Context

Theology of Work – to Chinese

• **Financial Security**
• **Success**
• **Sabbath**

Financial Security

- **Financial Security: Work is NOT our Financial Security, God is.**

- Many Chinese people work so hard for one reason: Financial Security. They are not merely working to make more money. They are making more money in order to save more money. And they are not only saving more money for themselves, but saving more money for their children and maybe even their grandchildren.

Financial Security

- What does the Bible say about Financial Security? Hebrews 13:5 says "Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU."
  - *New American Standard Bible:* 1995 (Heb 13:5). LaHabra, CA: The Lockman Foundation.

- Matthew 6:31-33: "Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."

Success

- **Success: Striving to be successful at work while needing to be ethical as well**
- One of the biggest problems in China right now is pollution. Over-development has brought serious pollution into the natural environment.

Sabbath

- **Sabbath: Rest is part of God's mandate for work**
- The design of work from God includes rest. Sabbath is not merely a nice option for Christians. It is a mandate. It is a commandment. Genesis 2:1-3 says "Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done." We need to rest from work because it is God's design. God blessed his work with rest. God makes rest holy.
  - *The Holy Bible: New International Version.* 1984 (Gen 2:1-3). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Questions

- What could we do differently as a Chinese Christians?
- Are we aware of how our culture impacts us?
- Do we have any blind spots regarding our view of work?
- Could you share your own view of the "Theology of Work?"
- Anything you are thinking to change in your workplace today?

END OF LESSON 7

Lesson 8

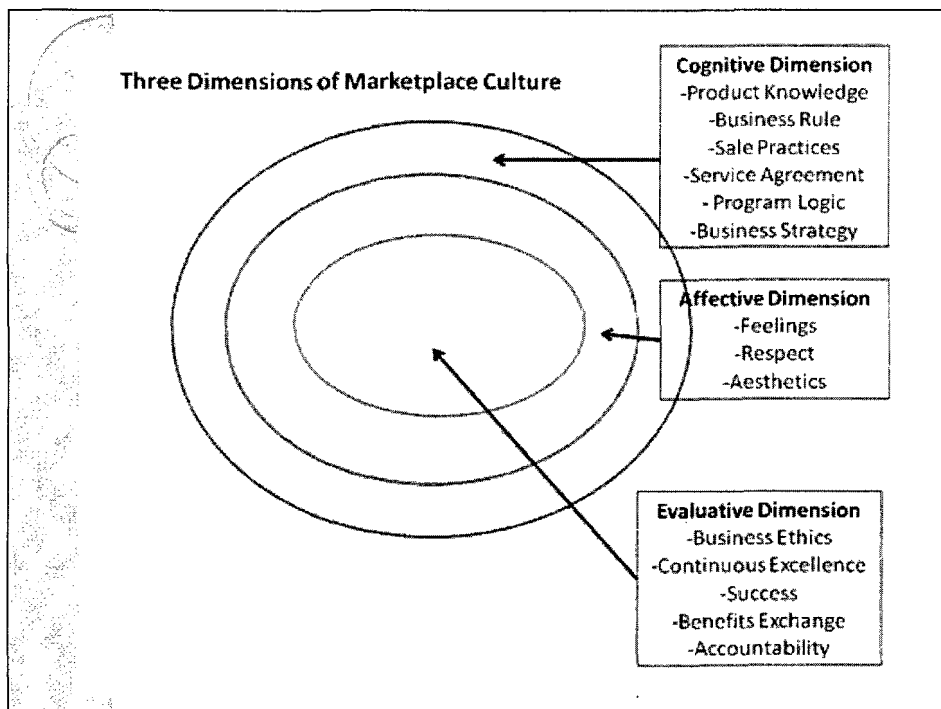- Are we, Chinese Christians, good workers in the eyes of God?

Question

- Are we, Chinese Christians, good workers in the eyes of God?
- Is it possible we could change the Workplace Culture?
- What is Culture?

Culture?

- Culture is "the more or less integrated systems of ideas, feelings and values and their associated patterns of behaviors and products shared by a group of people who organize and regulate what they think, feel and do.
- Paul Hiebert

Three Dimensions of Marketplace Culture

Cognitive Dimension
-Product Knowledge
-Business Rule
-Sale Practices
-Service Agreement
- Program Logic
-Business Strategy

Affective Dimension
-Feelings
-Respect
-Aesthetics

Evaluative Dimension
-Business Ethics
-Continuous Excellence
-Success
-Benefits Exchange
-Accountability

Love and Justice

- When we contrast Marketplace Culture's most inner dimension of Continuous Excellence and Success with the Christian Culture's most inner dimension of love, we see the difference. The Christian's innermost dimension has to do with God. God's characteristics of love and justice are two key elements within the Christian value system

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Christian Culture and Belief System

Local Tradition

Church Tradition

Bible

God
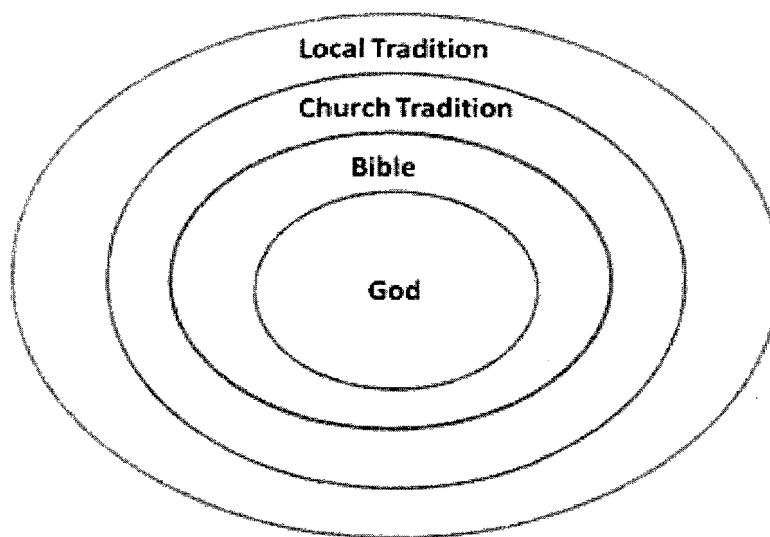
More about Culture

* Andy Crouch,
* Culture is not optional.
* We could not withdraw from the culture [even if we wanted to]. Culture is inescapable. And that's a good thing.

Shape it or be shaped?

* There are two kinds of attitude towards culture. One could select to live in the world that someone else has made. Or one could also choose to lead the way in living with a focus on shaping culture.

Qualifications for culture changers

✓ He needs to know his calling from God and be committed to doing it
✓ He needs to be spiritually qualified
✓ He needs a team to work together
✓ He needs social skills
✓ He needs a proper perspective on Work and Ministry
✓ He needs professional qualification
✓ He needs to like taking on new challenges
✓ He needs to have knowledge and passion for technological work

Cognitive Dimension

• **Cognitive Dimension** is to present the fact that this world is not only formed by Technology and Business, but also that God is active. God is present in the world.
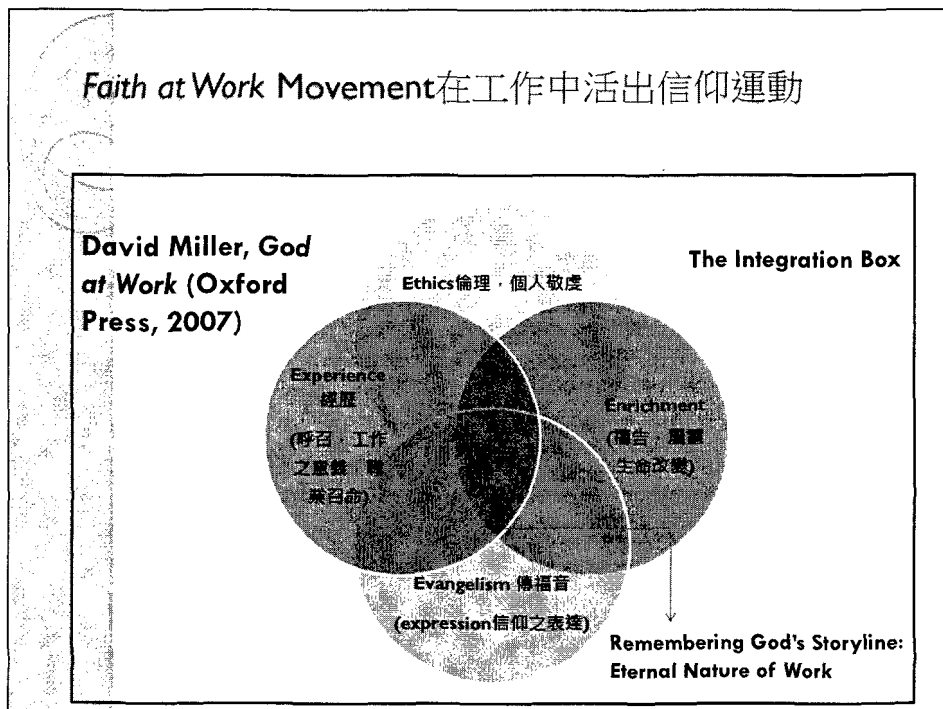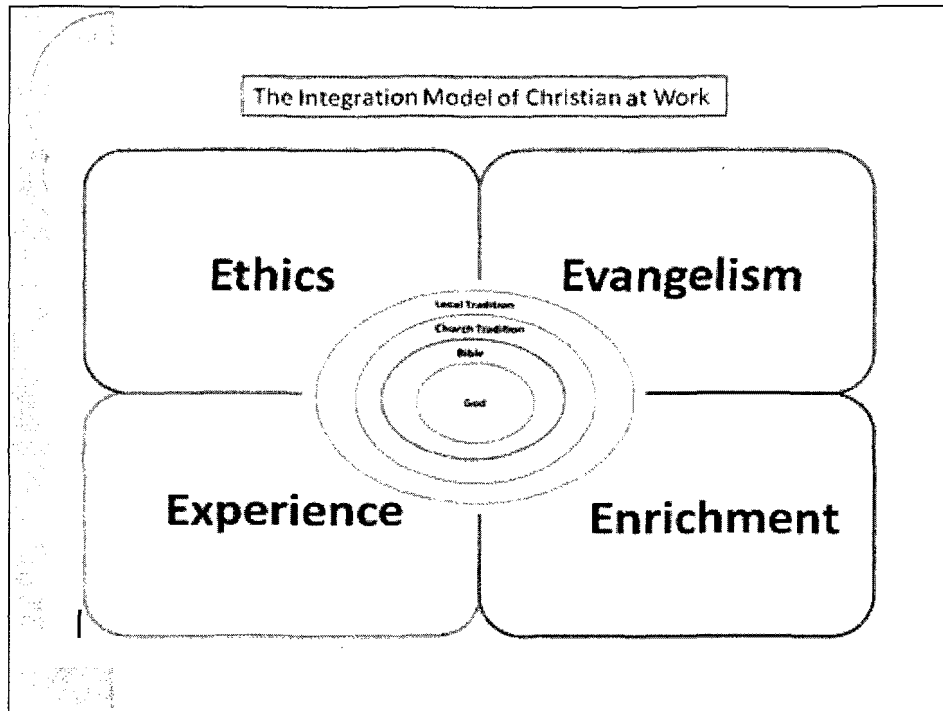
Affective Dimension

- **Affective Dimension** is to get their co-workers to have an initial impulse for drawing close to God. This is done so that eventually their co-workers will experience God for themselves.

Evaluative Dimension

- **Evaluative Dimension** is to transform people's heart so that they are capable of moral decision making. In fact, moral decision making should start from Christians since morality comes from God.

The Integration Model of Christian at Work

Ethics

Evangelism

Experience

Enrichment

Faith at Work Movement在工作中活出信仰運動

David Miller, *God at Work* (Oxford Press, 2007)

The Integration Box

Ethics倫理，個人敬虔

Experience 經歷
(呼召 工作
之意義 喚
業召命)

Enrichment
(禱告 靈意
主命改變)

Evangelism 傳福音
(expression信仰之表達)

Remembering God's Storyline:
Eternal Nature of Work

Evangelism

- It is very hard to simply explain the reality that God is in the world. *Evangelism* is needed, but evangelism alone is not enough. We may need to talk about this topic during a suitable opportunity. Pray for suitable opportunities. It could be a lunch time when people are curious about why you pray before you eat your lunch.

Ethics

- **Ethics** is another presentation tool. A working Christian may demonstrate a higher standard of business Ethics which could draw the attention of other people.

Practical Ethics for Work

- *Treat all people as unique, valuable, irreplaceable individuals.* Never treat anyone as worthless, dispensable, or "just a number."
- *Support the freedom, growth, and development of others.* Never view anyone through stereotypes and images, or as fixed and unchangeable.
- *Communicate to others by name with respect.* Never ignore people---or use demeaning, trivializing names/labels.
- *Work hard for people and spend time with them.* Don't just work and play for yourself ---and don't get unbalanced.

Experience

- The **Experience** quadrant is involved with questions like vocation selection, calling, meaning and purpose in and through our marketplace professions. Christians are not the only ones to ask about the meaning and purpose of technological work. Many non-Christians ask the same questions when they are facing a layoff, searching for a new job, experiencing company relocation or corporate re-organization and so forth.

Miller, David, *God at Work*, p 135

Enrichment

* **Enrichment** category, which is often inward and personal in nature, involving issues like healing, prayer, meditation, consciousness, transformation, and self-actualization.

Dwelt among us

* John 1:14 says "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth." The Greek word for "dwelt" is *skenoo* (σκηνόω). It has the same root as the word for "tent," *skene* (σκηνή). Its counterpart in Hebrew is the word *Mishkan* (מִשְׁכָּן). This word is rich with meaning. In the Old Testament, it relates to the glory of the tabernacle. It does definitely not mean to visit and leave.

* ESV Bible John 1:14
* Carson, DA, *Gospel According to John*, Chinese translation version, 2007, pp. 195-196

Questions

- What do you think about the qualification of Culture Changers?
- Do you think you are called to be the Culture Changer?
- For Chinese Christians
  - Do you think there is any special calling for Chinese Christians at work?
  - How about Chinese Christians who have so much impact in the technology world – how do you think God could call you to work differently?

END OF LESSON 8

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